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Can the Undead Speak?: Language Death as a Matter of (Not) Knowing

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ABSTRACT

This text studies how language death and metaphor algorithmically collude to propagate our intellectual culture. In describing how language builds upon and ultimately necessitates its own ruins to our frustration and subjugation, I define dead language in general and then, following a reading of Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," explore the instance of indexical translation. Inventing the *language in pain*, a de-signified or designated language located between the frank and the esoteric language theories in the mediaeval of examples of Dante Alighieri and Hildegaard von Bingen, the text acquires the prime modernist example of dead language appropriation in ἀλήθεια and φύσις from the earlier fascistic works of Martin Heidegger. It synthesizes the mood of language death underpinning intellection generally and the linguistic functions of nomination, necessitation, and equation, in particular. These functions are drawn from the tension located between significance and designificance and expounded in the mapping of *Daseinlichkeit*.

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There is a crisis or necessity to which intellection responds by appropriating and recycling language death for the creation of identities in communication. These transmissible, equatable identities are inherently materialistic and multicultural, serving and surviving as intellectual masses precipitated from the meeting of two or more languages, or of a language reuniting with its history under the concern for its future. This formalism of knowledge is not attested in average everyday speech but is a common function of written discourse. Metaphor is both efficient and final cause for this concretion of significance, the materialism of meaning, as well as its dissolution. This text begins to study how language death and metaphor algorithmically collude to propagate our intellectual culture. That is to say, I consider how a measurement of the carefully managed surplus of significance over what I will call *designificance* can distinguish our academic disciplines, our intellectual traditions and genres, and the moods in which we emphasize and deescalate our speech. Furthermore, I will explore how language builds upon and ultimately necessitates its own ruins to our frustration and subjugation, and how we might overcome this dominance by relinquishing materialist knowledge. The text presented, however, is but the first two chapters of a document intending to prove through (or because of and despite) these preliminary hypotheses that *mathematics is dead language.* Thus, while the ghost of this major but latent, failed thesis haunts, animates, and frightens into weakness all the sections below, the research questions really tested in the following are: "What does dead language *mean*? What would an undead language *be*?" I will argue that undead language is the attempt to make dead language *be* rather than *mean*.

Throughout the argument, I have had occasion to produce consistent terms and relations of identity by using the mood of language death diagnosed and defined in the following; I refuse this rubric sedimentation, however, and in order to objectify it but give it no voice, have instead opted for the proliferation of significance, of terms ordered or understood, outside of their determinant equivocation, by their synonymous contexts, preferring the fluidity of meaning and the emendations of metaphor to the solidity, sedimentality, and stability of a jargon coagulated from its identities of reference. Moreover, my sentences retain the original Greek orthography of all Greek words, while the many texts quote, however, have unfortunately already transliterated them into Roman characters, which, of course, I, powerless, print verbatim. This swerving of alphabets can cause confusion, which I have tried to limit with only limited intervention.

1. LANGUAGE DEATH, INDEXICAL TRANSLATION, AND THE CRYPTOGRAPHIC GOD AS SEVERAL

INTRODUCTIONS TO (UN)DEAD LANGUAGE AND THE *LANGUAGE IN PAIN*

I. THE ARGUMENT: THE CONCEPT OF DEAD LANGUAGE

Defining dead language and its criteria is a difficult or impossible task. Describing dead language in practice or presence, however, is more possible. In his essay "Language Birth and Death", Salikoko Mufwene outlines a socioeconomic historicism of language death. Short of providing a definition, he describes a deterministic process of language evolution where populations are hosts to a language which, as both tool and virus, helps and hinders their congress in an economy. Mufwene describes language in the metaphor of a virus while placing the economy of its speakers within the metaphor of an ecology, defining languages in general thus: "like biological species, their vitality depends on the ecology of their existence or usage; and […] like viruses, language features may change several times in their lifetime" (203). The usage of language pertains to its access in a socioeconomic sphere, an ecology where the principles of mediation are political and capital—a process which Mufwene identifies with globalization. Like sunlight and water for plants, politics and capital for languages direct the determinations of linguistic evolution, and cause the deaths of languages. Thus, dead languages are non-capital and apolitical: they die because they provide neither money nor power, the historical motive here for language death being the will of the people: "The less marginalized the Natives are from the local global economy system, the more likely they are to lose their heritage" (211). The more a language group is included, invited, or coerced into another politically and capitally dominant language, the more likely it is to die. This, Mufwene notes, dramatically recalculates the politics of language war and *linguicide*, for as he writes "languages do not

engage in wars[…], though they coexist in competition, like biological species. Languages are more endangered when populations speaking them interact peacefully with each other" (218). This description of the causes of so-called *linguicide* recalls a saying stolen from Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, i.e., killing them with kindness—a saying which, having lost the flavour of its coerciveness today, in its origin proposed as kindness those actions committed upon a unruly wife to bring her under a new husband's domination, actions which far from kind today qualify as torture under international law. It is just this type of kindness of domination at play in the *cold* language wars which, politically and economically waged, bring about the deaths of languages. This strife is precisely why language endangerment and death is "more pervasive in settlement colonies than in exploitation and trade colonies" (218); where a settlement requires assimilation or some form of cooperation from a majority, an exploitation or trade colony needs only the voice of those in power, labour and resources being muted by the pure materiality of their significance.

This political conception of dead language outlines why languages together will tend toward their own deaths by cooperation or coercion of their own togetherness, but it ignores just how a language will cease to be like its past and so become or form a new language from a dead one in the retrospective knowledge of speakers. In his study of the formation of creoles, Mufwene touches on the forbidden laws of the genesis of dead languages: "Unfortunately theories of evolution do not predict the future, and only the future will rule on these speculations" (203). The deterministic processes that he outlines cannot be foretold, like the meteorological phenomena, insofar as the determinations are largely obscured by lady fortune. Language death, he argues on analogy with language birth, is a misnomer; if by death we mean a

personal, momentous death, then the death of a language is rather a protraction akin to

extinction:

> The concept of 'language birth' is in fact a misnomer of some sort. The birth involves no pregnancy and delivery stages, and the term refers to a stage (not a point in time!) in a divergence process during which a variety is acknowledged *post facto* as structurally different from its ancestor.[…]Unlike in the case of <u>organisms,</u> but like in the case of <u>species,</u> language birth cannot be predicted. The recognition of separateness is made possible by <u>a cumulative accretion of divergence features relative to an ancestor language</u>[…].
>   Language death is likewise a protracted change of state. <u>Used to describe community-level loss of competence in a language,</u> it denotes a process that does not affect all speakers at the same time nor to the same extent.[…]Total death is declared when there are no speakers left of a particular language variety in a population that had used it. (204, his emphasis in italics, mine underlined)

The historical concept of dead language is therefore of an ahistorical event recognized after the

fact within a metaphor of the human lifespan, birth and death. To oppose these inaccurate,

personal terms, Mufwene draws from the field of biology for linguistic *genesis* and *extinction*.

His definition of each, underlined above, pertains in the case of genesis to an historical

comparison of a living with a dead language and in the case of extinction to an historicized

absence of language compared to those currently spoken. While the terms linguistic genesis and

extinction serve to better articulate the relations of the processes of language birth and death,

they cannot replace the archetypes of the *living* and the *dead* language because at the historicized

event of extinction or genesis the living or dead language is not a species or a collection of

processes, but rather it becomes a thing, universal speech-type. Outside an historicism of its

linguistic changes, a living language *is not* undergoing changes; rather it is only before the

possibility of change that the type of the living language stands, and so conceived without

historicism, without an analysis of changes over time, the living or dead language differs from

the concepts of linguistic genesis and extinction. The difference between extinction and death is the same as that between the diachronic and synchronic poles of language analysis, for it is only the identification of mutual language genesis and extinction that reveals the evolution of a language—the diachronic dimension or the historical aetiology being the unfolding (or the *having unfolded*) of extinction suddenly or gradually, the synchronic dimension or the modern simultaneity of historically predicated ideas being the afterthought and final conception of a language as dead, its 'deadness'. The diachronic allows for the eventless description or non-narrative document of what is understood as the historically contingent 'genesis' or 'extinction' of a language, while the synchronic gives event or name to this evolutionary loss, taking it from the descriptive facts and placing it among discursive ideas. While political language death results from the coercion of capital, historical language death manifests in a cultural temporality necessitated by the universal force of mutability.

Together, the historical and political concepts of language death reveal a process and its causes, but do not define the concept of dead language as such. Far from being the fossil of a dead virus, already having mutated into another lethal form long ago, and far from being merely the political capitulation of the oppressed, the dead language in a *phenomenological* conception —if we permit such an extravagance, which is as much to ask, what kind of presence does a dead language have, and how do we come to know it?—because of its synchronic absence, provides an ahistorical resurgence of history, a purified, rarefied, or *perfected* form of discourse, a near legality of authority in any of its expressions, such that its presence transcends its political and historical explanations. There is, as evidenced in frequent appropriations especially in the west of Classical Greek and Latin, an aesthetic substantiated by the historical and political conceptions

of dead language. These give scaffolding to the phenomenon of dead language appropriation. Because an un-appropriated dead language, an unspoken language not taken up in etymologies or texts, is therefore in-extent, the concept of dead language presupposes a presence of some form of appropriation; whether it be in the lexica of the sciences, the foundation of new terminologies, the history of spoken words, the appreciation of literature, the holdings of a library, or the inscriptions of ancient burial grounds, a dead language, known or knowable in more than name, is always already appropriated by the living.

II. WALTER BENJAMIN: INDEXICAL TRANSLATION AND ITS METONYMIC DISJUNCTION

To understand the position of dead language and its appropriation it is imperative to understand the mode of translation on which it depends. A dead language whose translation into living languages seeks to replace or represent it nears un-appropriation; such translations propose to forget the original; they are naive, easy new, born. In what follows we demonstrate two basic conceptions of translation one where the translation represents or replaces the original and another where the translation refers to or means the original, incorporating it. Walter Benjamin's arguments on translation allow us to develop these two opposing concepts, and in his conception of pure language we can begin to see the essence of dead language appropriation in general.

Walter Benjamin famously posits translation as a literary "mode" (70) in his "The Task of the Translator", a text which to English speakers with little German is itself a translation and one where, as Paul de Man demonstrates in his "'Conclusions' on Walter Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator'", the meaning is continuously and painfully riven by the transition. Unfortunately, we cannot read Harry Zohn's popular English translation of the text without de Man's

commentary, for the text runs behind a series of tensions and errors produced, ironically, by his translation. Informed by de Man's commentary, we will nevertheless provide our own, concentrating not so much on translation in general as on its execution of the original in the bearing of a linguistic new.

"Translation is so far removed," Benjamin writes, "from being the sterile equation of two dead languages that of all literary forms it is the one charged with the special mission of watching over the maturing process of the original language and the birth pangs of its own" (73). Translation here is akin to the process of language extinction, where the original language, the dead language, evolves into a new language, a language generated, but translation here has the added task of warding the dead: translation is to tend the graves of language. However, in a critical comment on this translation, de Man notes: "Zohn says 'birthpangs'. Why [he does] this is a mystery. *Wehen* can mean birth pangs, but it does mean any kind of suffering, without necessarily the connotation of birth and rebirth of resurrection" (25). Taken in this sense, the 'pains of the translation' can refer not only to a narrative of the procession from the original language to the belaboured new tongue, but also to the aesthetic disjuncture between grammar and meaning, the unique squirming effect of a translated text where the words and syntax seem to buckle against the potency of meaning and drown it (out). This *language in pain* is the afterlife of the original, but if we take translation as a universal textual presence, there is also a potential universal textual *language in pain*. That translatability is indeed a universal presence, even in commonly untranslatable texts, Benjamin asserts by means of his typical messianism:

> One might speak of an unforgettable life or moment even if all men had forgotten
> it. If the nature of such a life or moment required that it be unforgotten, that
> predicate would not imply a falsehood but merely a claim not fulfilled by men,

and probably also a reference to a realm in which it *is* fulfilled: God's remembrance. *Analogously*, the translatability of linguistic creations ought to be considered even if men should prove unable to translate them. (70, my emphasis)

Translatability therefore pervades textual language, as every text is therefore translatable, except, as Benjamin asserts, translations themselves:

Unlike the words of the original, [a translation] is not translatable, because the relationship between content and language is quite different in the original and the translation. While content and language form a certain unity in the original, *like a fruit and its skin*, the language of the translation envelops its content *like a royal robe with ample folds*. For it signifies a more exalted language than its own and thus remains unsuited to its content, overpowering and alien. This disjunction prevents translation and at the same time makes it superfluous. (75, my emphasis)

This 'more exalted language', the original language, is *signified* by an overpowering and alien language, a *language in pain*, and it is this injury to language that is its excess, at which Benjamin hints with his simile of the robe.

Arguments by analogy in both Benjamin's and de Man's two texts are indeed a little strange, in that each text denies the symmetry between symbol and symbolized, as de Man asserts in outlining the tensions which motivate Benjamin's *language in pain*: "So we have, first, a disjunction in language between the hermeneutic and the poetic, we have a second one between grammar and meaning, and finally, we will have a disjunction, says Benjamin, between the symbol and what is being symbolized, a disjunction on the level of tropes between the trope as such and meaning as a totalizing power of tropological substitutions" (30). These three tensions —that between interpretation and creation, that between literalness to the original and its basic sense, and lastly that between the parity of metaphor, which is itself symbolized in Benjamin's text as the asymmetry between original and translation—conform in the queer aesthetic of translated text, in that squirming of the *new* language. De Man characterizes this disjunction as

follows: "We have a metonymic, a successive pattern, in which things follow, rather than a metaphorical unifying pattern in which things become one by resemblance. […]they are already metonyms and not metaphors" (32). Translation does not resemble the original, but signifies it through an associative or metonymic relation. The *language in pain*, produced from translation, is itself just that metonym of the original text. In terms of our explication of dead language, Benjamin's conceptions of translation and his consequent *language in pain* is the diachrony of language extinction, while the vulgar understanding of translation as replacing or forgetting, as metaphor, is more akin to the synchrony of the political coercion and cold war of language death.

The disjunction between metonymy and metaphor in de Man's understanding of the text stands, in Benjamin's messianic thought, as the despair of man to God, where the metonymic is the succession of life as held in the narrative of destiny, and the metaphoric is the providence of God's ahistorical 'memory', the seeing of all time at once. Just such a providential and all-resembling language stands, in relation to our *language in pain*, as the pure language Benjamin holds under the governance of philosophy: "If there is such a thing as a language of truth, the tensionless and even silent depository of the ultimate truth which all thought strives for, then this language of truth […], whose divination and description is the only perfection a philosopher can hope for, is concealed in concentrated fashion in translations" (77). Translation begets and wounds a language, our *language in pain*, the text of every translation writhing under the three tensions aforementioned, which is in turn itself born pregnant, with some undelivered esoteric purity of language. The universality of the *metonymic following* produces the singularity of the *metaphoric resembling*:

that which seeks to represent, to produce itself in the evolving of languages, is that very nucleus of pure language. Though concealed and fragmentary, it is an active force in life as the symbolized thing itself, whereas it inhabits linguistic creations only in symbolized form. While that ultimate essence, pure language, in the various tongues is tied only to linguistic elements and their changes, in linguistic creations it is weighted with a heavy, alien meaning. To relieve it of this, to turn the symbolizing into the symbolized, to regain pure language fully formed in the linguistic flux, is the tremendous and only capacity of translation. In this pure language—which no longer means or expresses anything but is, as expressionless and creative Word, that which is meant in all languages—all information, all sense, and all intention finally encounter a stratum in which they are destined to be extinguished. (79-80)

Translation which "intends language as a whole" (76), its words signifying not the things themselves but the words of the original, is the ironic redeemer or messiah of fragmentary human languages, for in its apocalyptic *language in pain* it provides a glimpse of the everlasting language of being, a language uniting thing and meaning into pure language, at the death or end of language, as de Man contends here, the translated and the translation being merely two sides of the same death: "The translation belongs not to the life of the original, the original is already dead, but the translation belongs to the afterlife of the original, thus assuming and confirming the death of the original" (25). (Indeed, de Man is right to call the original dead, as the language of the original is a preserved, non-spoken, non-conversant, and therefore unnatural, language trapped behind translation for some, behind literature for others.) This pure language is not dead, is not alive, and indeed is not even present, as it appears only through the metonymic disjuncture between languages. The original, however is not dead and buried, not forgotten, not dead in the sense of useless but dead as ancestral, canonical, as Benjamin writes: "For in its afterlife—which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living—the original undergoes a change" (73). Insofar as translations are (the only) untranslatable, they are

the apocalyptic metonymy of the origin, the dead-end of heaven, where the translated receives its idolatry. It is the new language, the *language in pain*, that historicizes the death of the original.

Regarding the current status of the Latin language Claude Hagège writes: "Latin did not disappear everywhere from use. It is still the language of the Roman Church, as it was formerly of the Roman Empire. As is typical of the fate of human languages, Latin is not alive nor completely dead" (57). Popular culture has the perfect term for just such a state: the *undead*. In my own conception, Benjamin's *language in pain*, that queer effect of the squirming of language in translation, of grammar buckling against meaning, is not a living language in the sense that people speak it, in an encoded metonymic reference to an original, nor is it dead in the sense of death it confirms (or speaks for) in the language of the original text, the stasis of the aura of the work, but it instead approaches or is like *undead* language, a language of metonymic disjuncture, where "the relationship between the word and sentence is like the relationship between letter and word" (de Man 29), where the meaning lies behind the language as behind a formula. The meaning of real dead language lies trapped *behind translation*, just as in foreign languages, and as meaning lies trapped *under translation*, and thus the power of such language, dead or undead, over communication declines. Yet, precisely in its incommunicativeness, the dead language whose meaning or intention lies behind translation still provokes the mode of interpretation, still demands reading and translation by its form or presence. This denial of meaning in the demand for it is Benjamin's metonymic disjuncture, the esotericism of language, a dark aesthetics, the pure language.

Historically, the social want of the spectral universality and authority of certain dead languages appears first Dante Alighieri's project for the construction of an eloquent Italian

vernacular (formulated in *De Vulgari Eloquentia*). Having decided against using the classical

literary language of Latin for the Divine Comedy, Dante's first inclination was to synthesize a

rival literary language from the various unsatisfactory Italian dialects; but finding this process

unsavoury, he rejects the possibility of an eloquent synthetic language for the elegance and

vulgarity of a pastiche of his own dialect and the others of the Italian peninsula, dialects which

eventually cofound the language of the *Divine Comedy*. His initial attempt to synthesize a

literary language is an early European example of the perennial project to make a universal

communicative language starting from St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate and continuing today in the

form of Esperanto; it is also our first perspective on the *aesthetizing* of dead language divorced

from any language itself. It is also a language produced by translation to overcome translation,

and as a synthetic among dialects, would have the same relation to grammar and meaning, the

same queer aesthetic as translated language, as Benjamin's *language in pain*. This forms the first

polarity in our definition of undead language, one that meant to communicate immediately but

for some weight of "alien meaning" struggled.

The next, although historically earlier, is not (in the Benjaminian sense) a *language in*

pain in the sense of a translation-in, but a *pure language* in the sense of a translation-out: the

"*Lingua Ignota*", the *unknown language*, of Hildegard von Bingen, a mystical language designed

to conceal rather than convey meaning and our insight into the earliest European attempt to

construct an occult language. Akin to speaking in tongues, the *Lingua Ignota* sought to combine

being and meaning collapsing them into—or by invoking the being of meaning and the meaning

of being in—pure utterance. Ideas of universal or ideal languages, which were popular projects

among early enlightenment philosophers in the seventeenth century, are still current, as in the

contemporary example of the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European, a truly Frankensteinian

undead language, one entirely so stitched together from translations, as to be purely language. Of

our two conceptions of undead language, or two poles, the first being language as formula, and

the second language as spell, this project falls under the magic of history.

A. DANTE: THE *LANGUAGE IN PAIN*, MYSTICAL LANGUAGE, AND THE LANGUAGE OF GOD

There are two biblically rooted linguistic histories in *De Vulgari Eloquentia*: the first is of

the divine, unified origin of language with Adam, and the second, its confounding or scattering at

Babel. The former accounts for the existence of language in general, while the latter explains its

diversity. The former forms philosophically the first dead language, while the latter performs its

language in pain.

It is the second chapter of *Genesis* and the second creation story from which Dante adapts

his origin of language. Dante agrees with the Bible that the breath of life was breathed into the

nostrils of Adam, and he adds to this that at that moment of inspiration and inception language is

created with the soul of Adam and practiced in his first outward breath in which he speaks the

name of the supreme joy "God" in Hebrew, pronounced with the breath of God, the air of

creation. Thus, the first speech-act, according to Dante occurs at this moment, Gen. 2:7, and not

during Eve's conversation with the serpent, nor during the series of six illocutions in the first

chapter of *Genesis*: "Let there be light…. Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters…

etc." These statements, which seem to be first and greatest uses of language, Dante hints could

have been performed not by the divine voice but by natural things under divine control:

> Nor, on that account, need God have spoken using what we would call language. For who doubts that everything that exists obeys a sign from God, by whom, indeed, all things are created, preserved, and, finally, maintained in order? Therefore, if the air can be moved, at the command of the lesser nature which is God's servant and creation, to transformations so profound that thunderbolts crash, lightning flashes, waters rage, snow falls, and hailstones fly, can it not also, at God's command, so be moved as to make the sound of words, if He distinguishes them who has made much greater distinctions? Why not? (*De Vulgari* I, iv, 6).

Or it could be argued that there being no one to perceive these statements, they were not an exercise of language as such, intrinsic solipsism essentially cancelling the communication of language, rendering it as mute in its aloneness as Nimrod with his slug-horn among the giants at the well to the ninth circle of hell in his proud enunciation: "*Raphèl maì amècche zabì almi*" (*Inferno* XXXI:67), a line crafted under the aesthetic of Italian with Hebraic resonances but having no intentional meaning. (This problem of the first language is brought up again in the *Paradiso*, where Dante has Adam, the first soul, address Dante and contradict his speculation that Hebrew was the first Adamic tongue: "The tongue I spoke was utterly extinct / before the followers of Nimrod turned their minds / to their unattainable ambition" (*Paradiso* XXVI: 124-6). This later contradiction simply confirms that while the first dead language (in Dante's later theory) could not have been Hebrew, the tongue was given up by God to die in the coming mutability of the first transgression, translation being both cause and effect of the Fall.)

However, Dante makes an even stronger disagreement: when he writes, "It is manifestly absurd, and an offence against reason, to think that anything should have been named by a human being before God, when he had been made human by Him and for Him," he directly contradicts Gen. 2:19: "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and

whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." He seems to hint that instead of God's having Adam name the beasts and the fowls, God would be content rather just to hear His own Joyous name in Hebrew, and that further conversations between the two are far more mediated by wind and trees and far less human than they appear in that creation story. That God should have named all beings in an originary language by just repeating these primordial words places this first dead language within the *apriority* of translation. God names the beings and it is the sacred task of Adam to translated them into the miracle of speech, the holy human language.

Why place Adam as not the first speaker but the first translator? It seems that Dante felt that Adam's nomination of created things repealed or challenged God's authority in creating them. This is what we should expect from a Christian poet: the word is the primary power and is only on loan to humankind, a gift (rather Platonically) only to be used by us in representations, not formed by us, for the Adam's act of nomination would create the larger part of the vocabulary of the first dead language: the power of speech alone without the language itself would not have been a gift. (Dante does write that "the words used for things" were created with the soul of Adam.)

The second Biblical influence on Dante's theory of language is, as stated, the story of Babel, which he uses to explain the mutability, diversity, and confusion in and among modern languages. In short, Babel becomes the story of the birth of the vernacular in general. All speakers beforehand spoke Hebrew, the sacred language, which was preserved by the sons of Shem, the Israelites, who did not participate in Babel; and to some degree, then, all languages can be thought of as vernaculars of Hebrew. The original story is itself very short. It takes place

between two genealogical tables and in the first half of the eleventh chapter of *Genesis*. The

connexion of Nimrod with the architect of the city is extra-biblical; it is only written that he was

a mighty hunter before the Lord and that the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, among others.

What is most important for Dante is that the linguistic divisions are simultaneous with the

geographical dispersions: "And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one

language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they

have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not

understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of

all the earth: and they left off to build the city." (Gen. 11:6-8) Here, as in Dante, linguistic

difference is one and the same with migration, a linguistic diaspora, so to speak. However, what

Dante adds to this is the character of the subsequent nationhoods: each language is born in the

profession at work on the tower and each profession resettles as a race. Thus, at the root of every

nation (except for the Jews) is a common history of work against god. This audacity of origin is

the only unifying quality in modern languages, which were doomed to haphazardness and

metamorphosis. It is only the political (or sacred) capital of Hebrew which preserves it from

evolutionary death. Being already a translation, as well as a sacred tongue, it is the metonymic

afterlife of the voice of god. But it also the source of the all future corruptions, all languages to

be born and die, all *languages in pain*, develop metonymically from a primordial metonymy, a

metonymic disjuncture open by the translation of sin, of the second fall, the fall of language.

From here, perhaps we can see a reason for Dante's curiosity with both the classical,

standardized, unchanging languages, such as Latin or "Grammatica", and the vernaculars

variously disputing within Italy, as well as for his hunt for the illustrious, universal Italian

dialect: if linguistic change is the result of sin, then methods of linguistic standardization,

grammar and literature, are ways to return to or to reform a pseudo-prelapsarian language, one of

reduced mutability; thus are they methods of repentance, in the search for the primordial dead

language, for the metaphor of the voice of god.

Though language receives much of its mutability at Babel, in order for it to be developed

by Adam, there must have been a minimum of change in the original medium. Alfred Ewert in

his essay "Dante's Theory of Language" outlines the two opposing strands of linguistic history

that are synthesized in Dante and held by the earlier patristic writers, especially Aquinas: "As to

the origin of language, St Thomas seems to hesitate between two views[…]. He indicates

incidentally (when he describes God's intervention at Babel) that man received language as an

express gift of God, but he develops more at length the theory that language was invented by

man and that Adam himself named things and formed derivatives" (359). These two opposing

views, that language was formed by god and given to Adam or that it was constituted by Adam's

practice are both represented in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* by biblical allusions. The first is its

divinity in *Genesis*: "a certain form of language was created by God along with the first soul; I

say 'form' with reference both to the words used for things, and to the construction of words, and

to the arrangement of the construction" (I, vi, 4). The second is its humanly controlled

development: "and this form of language would have continued to be used by all speakers, had it

not been shattered through the fault of human presumption" (I, vi, 4). The language having been

fully determined either by God or by Adam, humankind at Babel stole language from its creator,

so to speak, by transgression: the confusion of tongues and the birth of linguistic adaptability are

one and the same mixed blessing. The transgression at Babel is a theft from Adam of the power

over language, the theft of translation. Thus, translation with its consequent *language in pain* intertwines these two opposing strands of communication: the power of linguistic adaptability, translation, leads directly to the confusion of tongues, the *language in pain*.

The standard (Aquinian) synthesis for these two strands is less concerned about the immutability of the first language and leans towards the second, that the *power* of language was only formed and given by God and that Adam et al. fashioned a vocabulary for it, following a reading of Gen. 2:19. Having rejected this verse, however, Dante's synthesis of these two strands is effected merely by including both allusions, for although the Adamic language was incorruptible, all succeeding languages are still powers given by (or resulting from) God which humankind can then wield and mould. Thus, the translation was given in Eden and the power or the possibility to translate was taken at Babel.

Dante's search for a repentant, noble, universalizing language is only a stage in the development of his linguistic theory. In the *Convivio*, his linguistic hierarchy is inverted: instead of the "*nobilior est vulgaris*" of *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, he supports the much more traditional position that Latin is nobler because it is "eternal and incorruptible", that "the vernacular follows custom, while Latin follows art" (I, v). In the *Convivio*, the nobility of Latin is a hindrance to its use in Dante's projects and publication, for his intended audience is all intellectually capable Italians not just the lettered elite, and the commonness of the vernacular, however lamentable its corruptibility, is therefore an expedient; however, in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* the corruptibility of the vernacular is the principle that would allow for the project of language (re-)building. The project to build an anti-Babel language, one which counteracts the effects of Babel and which Dante seeks in this work, a unifying language that can bring all Italians together in one

cause and solve all disputes of meaning, is ironically a project like the building of the Tower of

Babel itself. To disregard a divinely instituted punishment and unite people who were to be

misunderstood, however much it might be for lofty moral aims, is to create a too powerful tool.

Such a unity project, if it were possible, could easily turn from a tool of unity and guidance to

one of subjugation. Unlike Babel, it would not threaten the security of heaven, but it could

provide an empire with the utility to lead its population from the path of God, a fate that the

linguistic diaspora would also lead to, however haphazardly. But it is this haphazardness, the

locating of change in accident and small groups rather than arbitrarily in large controlled nations,

that saves the agency of the soul on the path to God. Whereas the confusion of tongues allows for

the confusion of faiths and requires a Pentecost of reunion, a singular, towering, hegemonic

language not created by God could completely remove the Word of God if its emperor were

apostate. The variety in heteroglossia, "the problem of internal differentiation, the stratification

characteristic of any national language," (Bakhtin 67) confuses, as much as it preserves,

meanings in the dialectical and idiolectical gaps constituted by the individuation of speech,

insofar as a linguistic hegemony, a world language without individuation, would mean the loss of

the power of translation both into a language and between it, the loss of the technology of

assimilation by meanings: the perfect exercise of this technology would end itself in the

uniformity of monoglossia.

In his *Monarchia*, Dante gives this guidance of humankind to two positions, the pope for

eternal happiness and the emperor for temporal happiness. But language itself as a guide controls

both these aims, so that a corruption-destroying language of the path of eternal happiness could

as well effect the loss of the language of rightly reasoned moral or temporal happiness. Whereas,

as related in the *Monarchia*, in a society church and state can be kept equal and separate, in language the two could easily become the same discourse. From here we can see the binary common throughout Dante's work: in the creation of language in *Genesis* lies the eternal, spiritual, while in the confounding of tongues at Babel lies the temporal, moral empire—the birth of the primordial dead language being a synchronic archetype, while the constitution of the *language in pain* is a continuously writhing historical index whose meaning fluctuates as the relations between words bend under the *wait* of every year.

The concern of the first book of the *Monarchia* is that the emperor provide "a common purpose for all" (5) which is "constantly to actualize the full intellectual potential of humanity, primarily through thought and secondarily through action (as a function and extension of thought)" (8). Yet the first example of the empire of language and of a common purpose in the bible is one of sin. Thus if language is not mediated by correct thought (if it is directed by an abrogating Nimrod), it will lead to incorrect action (the building of Babel), which will subsequently cause further misunderstandings (the confusion of tongues), which only by its own haphazardness and the effort needed to overcome this can save the race from complete misdirection. Babel being a type of immunology, the shattered race would not thereafter be so easily misled against their interests; one person could only create a common, perhaps false, purpose for all at the expense of incredible energy, and the first example in the Bible of such a leader details the potential for mass sin.

Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that Dante abandons this tower of anti-Babel for his Divine Comedy as he admits in his letter to Cangrande: "As regards the style of language, the style is unstudied and lowly, as being in the vulgar tongue" (31). Earlier when he describes the

languages of comedy and tragedy, he asserts tacitly that both are capable of intermixing or heteroglossia: "Tragedy and comedy differ likewise in their style of language; for that of tragedy is high-flown and sublime, while that of comedy is unstudied and lowly. […]the comedian may on occasion use the language of tragedy, and vice versa" (30). If either is as capable of representing the variety of life, why choose to write with the majority of language in the register of comedy? Firstly, Dante calls the work a comedy on the basis of its plot, ending happily in heaven, regardless of its language: "it is clear that the present work is to be described as a comedy. For if we consider the subject-matter, at the beginning it is horrible and foul, as being Hell; but at the close it is happy, desirable, and pleasing, as being Paradise" (31). Thus the comedic form of language would be more suited to the form of plot and this would be more proper in the Aristotelian conception of virtue. But secondly, the humility of basing such a grandiose project in the lowly style is strikingly similar to the maxim of *De Vulgari Eloquentia*: "*nobilior est vulgaris*" (I, i, 4). The plurality of language and the pastiche of the vernaculars being the confusion of tongues allows for translation, and Italian—taken as the sum of its vernaculars, and not as a monolithic hegemonic promotion of one of its ontologically dead vernaculars nor as a uncanny synthesis of all of them into an language undeath—is a *language in pain*.

B. HILDEGARD VON BINGEN: (UN)DEAD LANGUAGE AND THE *LINGUA IGNOTA*

While in our diachrony we posited the translated as the dead language and the translation as the *language in pain*, this conception was useful to distinguishing both dead language and *language in pain* in a primary sense. Nevertheless, in order to reveal (un)dead language—by

which we mean dead language not only appropriated by the living in the linguistic museum structure of the language of knowledge, but actively re-employed for entirely new purposes—it has become important to show a reversal. (Un)dead language, cited as an authority in a science, used in the formulation of new terminologies, etc., has the unique presence of combining the new and old. Rather than awaiting translation to produce its indexical *language in pain*, it stands on its own, in its ancient, as a *language in pain* indexed to a new meaning. Perhaps, the greatest example in twentieth century philosophy of (un)dead language, Heidegger's ἀλήθεια, which to him means phenomenal *unconcealment*, but to the Greeks meant the truth spoken from an open heart, stands in his texts inversely indexed to a meaning it never had. Within a paradox, it is ἀλήθεια which translates for Heidegger *unconcealment*. This reversal of indexical translation, however, does not obviate the metonymic disjunction; it simply traverses the abyss backward.

Considering the lifestyle of Hildegard von Bingen at the head of her own abbey, Richard Witts succinctly describes her esotericism within an aestheticism: "Hildegard even devised a metaphysical language for use inside the convent—a *lingua ignota*—being a vocabulary of 900 names for earthly and heavenly entities, together with a special alphabet of 23 characters. The *lingua ignota*, the songs, the abstruse visionary communications, together with the nuns' unorthodox dress—the 'crowns of gold filigree into which are inserted crosses on both sides', noted by Tenxwind in her letter—these are surely related manifestations of the recondite, almost occult, climate in which Hildegard desired to maintaining her exclusive sect of aristocratic virgins" (483). The principle aesthetic here is that of covering over, of secrecy, of the privacy or the freedom of the unknown.

While Heidegger's (un)dead language consists in a reversal of places between the dead language and the translation, Hildegard's *lingua ignota* as a type of cypher for otherwise named things also functions as the translation of a living language by a 'dead' one. Both are examples of translation-out to produce a *language in pain* mutated into a dead language. This effect is to place into the unknown the previously known, to make other the familiar, for as Anne Clark Bartlett shows, Hildegard places herself within the unknowing rather than the known: "What I see in a vision, I do not know, since I am uneducated and have been taught only to read out letter in all simplicity. That which I write I see and I hear, and I do not set down any words other than those that I hear […] for in this vision, I am not taught to write as the philosophers write" (51). Her deference in the face of her intelligence can be explained as the modesty of *captatio benevolentiae*, but it also still participates in her preferred locus of the unknowing.

Breaking down the *Lingua Ignota*, Jeffrey T. Schnapp offers this taxonomy: "first, the supernatural sphere; second, the human order; third, the church; fourth, the secular order; fifth, time measurements; sixth, the socio-economic sphere; and seventh, the natural world" (284). The language seeks to rename everything from top to bottom, so to speak (285). As with Dante's, its purpose is to return language to an Adamic principle of nomination, a language of being where word and thing are one, but as with all linguistic endeavours, it is always already doomed by the fall of Babel:

> Beyond this oblique avowal of prophetic intent, the most intriguing evidence that naturalist description and mystical vision are thoroughly intertwined in the *Lingua ignota* is internal. On the grammatical level, Hildegard's language consists entirely of substantives in the nominative case. So not unlike Dante's pre-pronominal Adamic tongue, it seems to envisage a state of absolute linguistic plenitude in which names and nouns simply radiate their meanings and

interconnections, without ever having to decline into the carnivalesque world of pronouns, verbs, predicates, modifiers or adjectives. (289).

Nomination, however, is not the principle offered to humankind and to human languages; the human must be content with the power of translation alone, for as Schnapp defines it appealing to Wittgenstein at the outset of his analysis of Hildegard:

> A true *Geheimsprache*—a "private" or "secret" language—is not possible because meaning is not an event that simply "happens" when an individual imposes a name upon a given sensation or object for which he or she claims to find no existing proper noun.[…]This is because the mere act of naming already presupposes a complex set of cognitive operations; operations which, in turn, ensure that words cannot occur in a simple one-to-one relation to their referents. The event of meaning begins to "happen" only when *words are used in relation to other words*, when they give up their claim to a subjectivist referentiality. For [a] neologism to "make" sense, then, it will have to be placed in circulation. It will have to be sent away from the private scene of naming and cast in a new public role. The stage-setting into which it is thrust is at once the theater of other words, a cognitive grammar and an intersecting social world. There it will figure as a differential sign within the larger language game. (268-9, my emphasis)

Therefore, the *Lingua Ignota* can only be private in the sense of a secret; as a language formed on the gift of translation and with presence of inverted translation, it is always competitive or complicit with other languages tending towards their end. The specific difference with (un)dead languages is that in their complicit competition they have been drawn to their end at their beginning, having been aligned with their asymptote by the only human power over language: translation. Inverse translation annihilates their history. In an essay which holds a mirror up to our own and taunts us, Schnapp concludes his remarks on Hildegard: "the *Lingua ignota* represents an effort to begin language anew, to do away with all the tarnished stage-setting and rediscover the aesthetic core of human language (language as virgin beauty, ornamentation, music, objectless play); an effort to recover the purity and innocence of Adam's act of naming in

the present" (287). And this aesthetic of the return is just the phenomenon peculiar to the (un)dead language. Such language manifests the desire to disentangle everyday, public speech and, in this freeing, to move directly to the matter at hand. Thus it is revealed that (un)dead language is inherently naive: it is in the easy nature of the technology of translation that these tombstones and ruins of language past, its epigrams, sacraments, and mysteries, enter and entrance the document of its current use, that language shores up its foundations in its ruins by the nativity of obsolescence.

2. Heidegger's Ἀλήθεια as an Historical, Etymological Predication of (Un)dead

Language

I. The Argument: Ἀλήθεια, Φύσις, and Dasein as the Pains of Language

In the fifth chapter of *Being and Time*, Heidegger asks: "What kind of being does language have if there can be a 'dead' language? What does it mean ontologically that a language grows or declines?" (160/166). Although this is not a question he formulates expressly to answer, he prepares a way for us to conceive of a 'Heideggerian' approach in another work, his *Introduction to Metaphysics*. There, he fleshes out two major concepts for the understanding of being: ἀλήθεια and φύσις. The Ancient Greek word ἀλήθεια, meaning truth in the sense of openness, political transparency, unconcealed intention, and therefore trust, forms the sort of social contract to which one yields and resorts in the system and administration of language. The first sign of language death is the decline in the trust of this significance, the loss of bright ἀλήθεια's soft coercion, the authority it supplies. When a word or language dies, not only does the forcefulness with which it built and changed the world decline, but a degree of its being, that which brought forth this worldliness, diminishes as well and slowly changes into a handiness, a utility or mere material, deadening the natural intercourse and readiness of its discursive power, its fractious and volatile will to mean over all sound and space. This will to meaning is that plenary existence of language, the being which forces significance even into the furthest and most hostile reaches of signs, even into (self-)contradiction, contranymity, nonsense, even into the extremity of syntax and the tears of idiom: it is the answer to why there is meaning instead of nothing, instead of no meaning, why one finds significance even in hazardous sound and shape, in the delight of thunderous bleak duplicity, the sustenance of the occult even under direct

observation, the sustainer of symbolism in the *anti-symbolic*, this very impossibility. While *ἀλήθεια* bears out the rank and warranty of meaning, meaning's *grasp* on the credulity of existence, it is this emergence of meanings, their volubleness in the full excitement of language, their commotion or commanding outburst that overwhelms surrounding sense and outdoes natural human feelings, outnumbering them, this authoritative self-showing, self-fulfilment, self-repletion, is the *φύσις* of language. When a language dies, its *φύσις*, its *reach*, most notably stops with it, trampling no further across the globe, disturbing no future recitations. Dead language lets its reach and grasp, its *φύσις* and *ἀλήθεια*, fall and slow into suspiring sedimentations, while undead language has them ripped from it and made anew, its truth retracing, its pervasion scattered again, thus a deadening to its interactivity, its exchangeability, its mutual dominion over other words, which, making a show of its strangeness, rebuts its inclusion in any time, and no longer being in this natural flow, its course of significations no longer spring from this shared source but rather are imposed by its undeadener, the one for whom the word now means. This acquirement over the word weakens its own command, its own *phusic* self-showing and the authority of its generation, but makes it more like its saviour; being shaped by saving hands, its new tyranny in a person boasts of its new convenience. This resuscitation and consequent resemblance remoulds language in Dasein's image, making frail plastic what was once light and sound, making solitude of what was invasive.

II. Ἀλήθεια as Indexical Translation, and Militant Thinking in the Mood of

Language Death

"If we merely replace," Heidegger says in his lecture course entitled simply *Parmenides*,

"the Greek ἀλήθεια with our 'unconcealedness,' we are not actually translating. That occurs only

when the translating word 'unconcealedness' transports us into the domain of experience … out

of which the Greeks … say the word" (11/16). As simple translation is not enough to disclose the

essence of ἀλήθεια or truth, for one must take on the aspect of the culture appropriated, bare

'unconcealment' therefore ironically fails to disclose itself. What we intend to do in this section

is to take on not the Greek invocation of truth, but Heidegger's appropriation of it. Although

ἀλήθεια becomes more explicitly important for Heidegger after *Being and Time*, such as in his

lecture courses *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus* and *Parmenides*,

but as its presence still however permeates this first text, we will focus our analysis of ἀλήθεια,

supplemented by these later works, on the phenomenological concepts of his earlier magnum

opus, as an attempt to reveal the figure of truth at the core of Heidegger's early thinking and

appropriating, his earlier work being especially marked by terms taken from the Ancient Greek

and his later work unfolding from the same concerns. The importance of this term for Heidegger

is largely in phenomenal experience, in the revelation of being as a whole in self-showing.

Ἀλήθεια is truth as such for Heidegger, because truth is unconcealment in phenomenal

experience, in the appearance of being itself.

Heidegger distinguishes two concepts of truth, the common sense derivative of truth as

correspondence between statement and fact and a more primordial sense of truth as statement

which reveals being: "To say that a statement is true means that it discovers the being in

itself" (*Being* 210/218). From this "primordial appropriation" (*Being* 211/220) of truth falls the

derivation of corresponding truth: prior to any correspondence the beings themselves must have

revealed themselves. Truth of this sort in language is showing. When Heidegger says

"unconcealment, ἀλήθεια, belongs to the λόγος" (*Being* 211/219), he asserts that "λόγος as

discourse really means δηλοῦν, to make manifest 'what is being talked about' in

discourse" (*Being* 30/32). Here the belonging ἀλήθεια is already a part of discourse, because the

λόγος unconceals the beings it 'talks about' and "for those who do not understand, what they do

remains in concealment" (*Being* 219). Language makes clear what people do if it is understood,

that is, if its 'beings' are unconcealed. Finally, Heidegger asserts such of the word ἀλήθεια: "To

translate this word as 'truth' … is to cover over the meaning of what the Greeks posited at the

basis—as 'self-evident' and as pre-philosophical—of the terminological use of ἀλήθεια" (*Being*

211/219).

Logical ἀλήθεια means the making clear of the "λεγόμενον [the said or discussed] (what

is pointed to as such)" (*Being* 32/34, my interpolation in brackets, his in parenthesis). The

legomenon (which I will continue to transliterate to accent its polarity with phenomenon and to

form another neologism: *legomenal*, based on phenomenal) can be contrasted with the

phenomenological concept of the phenomenon: "*Phenomenon*—the self-showing in itself—

means a distinctive way something can be encountered" (*Being* 29/31). The *legomenon* is the

distinctive way something can be encountered in discourse; it is the phenomenon of the logical

ἀλήθεια. Heidegger has yet another set of terms for making clear in language: the thematic. The

unthematic characteristics of phenomena which must be laboured into 'appearance' partake of

Heidegger's ἀλήθεια as yet another type of unconcealing: being made aware of. The *legomenon*

is a phenomenon being pointing to and the guiding of this pointing is the theme. The thematic, therefore, relates to the realm of the *legomenon* and the logical ἀλήθεια as the reason for the discourse.

While the theme of the *legomenon* is decided by the Dasein of the discourse, the theme of the phenomenon is φύσις, the guiding of the unconcealing of 'nature' itself. The shining of both λόγος and being are similar in 'appearance' but differ in potency. Heidegger clarifies the relation between or his conflation of λόγος and φαίνω: "When fully concrete, discourse (letting something be seen [φαίνεσθαι]) has the character of speaking or vocalization in words. λόγος is φωνή, indeed φωνή μετὰ φαντασίας [voice amidst perception]—vocalization in which something always is sighted" (*Being* 31/32-3). Λόγος is φωνή, but it is also φῶς, as in Heidegger's etymology of the φαίνω in φαίνεσθαι: "φαίνω belongs to the root φα-, like φῶς, light or brightness, that is, that within which something can become manifest, visible in itself" (*Being* 27/28). This characterization of light is the same as that Heidegger gives to language: revealing. Thus he places the phenomenon and the *legomenon* on very similar planes, planes which share in the ἀλήθεια of disclosure and a common Greek past.

In his essay "Heidegger's Recent Thought on Language," Thomas N. Munson in criticizing Heidegger's etymological method of philosophy reveals the spatial metaphor at the core of Heidegger's philosophy and his respect for language: "Heidegger and other phenomenologists make no claim to be philosophers of 'ordinary language,' although they often do extensive linguistic analyses to grasp a word in its 'original' meaning. They seem to feel that buried beneath cultural overtones or strata of derivative usages lies a 'natural meaning' which somehow reflects the primitive experience, the insight into a *Wesen*" (367). For Heidegger, the

true meaning of a word does lie concealed in its history, because etymologies are ἀλήθειαι, unconcealments, of a word's truth.

In Lakoff and Johnson's book *Metaphors We Live By*, the authors offer a method for the deconstruction of metaphor, which they define thus: "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (5, emphasis redacted). Heidegger's fundamental metaphor given voice as ἀλήθεια can be rephrased in the terms of Lakoff and Johnson as: "TRUTH IS DEEP(ER)," that is to say, that truth, the criterion shared and construed between fact and belief, is initially hidden or secret beneath a misleading and superficial comprehending, and that this spatialization metaphor grounds both its definition and function, for "truth is always relative to a conceptual system that is defined in large part by metaphor" (159); thus the truth about truth depends upon its own self, its own metaphor. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger addresses the literal meaning of the positioning of the phenomena of phenomenology:

> The being of beings can least of all be something 'behind which' something else stands, something that "does not appear." Essentially, nothing else stands "behind" the phenomena of phenomenology. Nevertheless, what is to become a phenomenon can be concealed. And it is precisely because phenomena are initially and for the most part not given that phenomenology is needed. Being covered up is the counterconcept to "phenomenon." (*Being* 32/34).

Concealment in Heidegger's ἀλήθεια is more akin to unknowing or to being unavailable to sight than to being truly covered. What is to become a phenomenon is simply unknown before it is unconcealed. However, Heidegger and his Greek tradition found it useful to spatialize this absence. While Heidegger admits there are manifold spatialities of concealment, he instead forms a binary between ignorance and ἀλήθεια: "The covering up itself, whether it be understood in the sense of concealment, being submerged, or disguised, has in turn a twofold possibility.

There are accidental coverings and necessary ones, the latter grounded in the enduring nature of the discovered" (32/34). Accidental coverings-up are mere negligence of concern, while necessary concealment is the object of study for phenomenology as the possibility of ontology.

Insofar as the initial spatiality of the metaphor suggests a second meaning, namely that "truth is discoveredness or disclosedness," another complementary metaphoricity of ἀλήθεια reveals itself: ἀλήθεια is both a spatial and procedural understanding of the truth. Concerning the cultural determinations of metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson write: "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture" (22). Because Heidegger is not a culture of his own, but rather borrowed ἀλήθεια from the Greeks, it is to be assumed that on the basis of begetting a concept of truth from unconcealment, Heidegger, and the Greek culture which he inherits, deeply valued not only uncovering and looking deeper but also secrecy, in that the true appears or comes into being through the process of being disclosed from cover; good things are hidden, secured. The pre-hermeneutical value of the true is the secret, such demonstrating the fundamental esotericism in Heidegger's hermeneutics. It is thus with Heidegger as with Hildegard, that the production of truth springs from the conservation of secrecy.

Because such a significant structural metaphor and its latent or paraphrastic content cannot exist without informing, Lakoff and Johnson assert that "values are not independent but must form a coherent system with the metaphorical concepts we live by" (22). Thus, this deeper meaning to ἀλήθεια is not simply appearance but serves to reveal the deeper structure of Heidegger's concern and method. Indeed, as Heidegger writes in "The Way to Language," the very structure of language follows this same system of valuation: "Every language is historical,

also in cases where human beings know nothing of the discipline of history in the modern

European sense. Nor is language as information *the sole* language in itself. Rather, it is historical

in the sense of, and written within the limits set by, the current age" (422). The epochal

systematicity of language, metaphor, and culture, here, grounds both the contingent

metaphoricity of the Greek Heidegger appropriates and the limits within which such an

appropriation can occur. Etymology in this sense is not an unconcealment of a root but an age's

phenomenal interpretation of the history of the word in question. Thus, Heidegger allows for and

excuses the errancy of looking back—something to which we will return at the end.

   This metaphoricity of truth as spatiality, however, is only part of the metaphoric essence

of Heidegger's *ἀλήθεια*, for he also offers us another, complementary metaphor for truth in his

lecture "On the Essence of Truth": "The essence of truth is freedom" (123). Truth as freedom is

not the same as truth as unconcealment, but these two are interconnected in the imagistic

philosophy of Heidegger by his characteristic (a rather famous) symbolism of the forest clearing,

to which he explicitly admits in his lecture course *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave

Allegory and Theaetetus*: "We speak of a 'forest clearing' [*Waldlichtung*]; that means a place

which is *free* from trees, which *gives* free access for going through and looking through. *Lighting

up* therefore means making-free, giving-free. Light lights up, makes free, provides a way

through" (43-44). The metaphorical interpretation or hermeneutic of the meaning of light

becomes explicit when we consider how the blind might respond to the last sentence. That

"lighting up" does not make the blind free is needlessly articulated but in its banality it shows yet

another plane of metaphoricity in Heidegger's truth: "The essence of truth as unhiddenness

belongs in the context of freedom, light, and beings" (29).

In his essay "Demythologizing Heidegger: 'Alētheia' and the History of Being," John D. Caputo exposes this philosophizing in narrative and symbol by contending that "Heidegger could never resist a good story" (520), that much to the philosopher's detriment "Heidegger's best insights are obscured by his penchant for heroic tales and privileged epochs, for first dawns and new beginnings" (519). This leads Caputo to commit an analysis of Heidegger's *ἀλήθεια* where instead of being posed an originary, classical concept of truth, *ἀλήθεια* takes on a post-narratival sense. Instead of *ἀλήθεια's* history being a type of *ἀλήθεια* of history—that is to say, instead of Heidegger's use of *ἀλήθεια* as truth being an unconcealment of the weight or cover (or wait) of time, where he had to employ an etymology upon contemporary terminology in order to reveal the true truth—Caputo argues for an ahistorical or demythologized *ἀλήθεια* entirely defined through the medium of Heidegger's thought. Caputo, in explaining how the significance of Heidegger's alpha-privative etymology for *ἀλήθεια* is lost in grand narrative etymology, contends that "for this demythologized Heidegger, *a-lētheia* is not a Greek word. The hyphen breaks up its nominal unity, prevents it from belonging to any historical age or language. *A-lētheia* is not the Greek or any other historical master-name of Being but rather the inconspicuous open space within which the history of the names of Being unfolds" (520). *Ἀ-λήθεια*, as un-forgetting or unconcealing, no longer designates a predicate but a process; it is no longer a quality of something but rather a way to something, i.e., being as such. Therefore, *Ἀ-λήθεια* is not "truth" in a vulgar sense, but a way to truth—a *truthing* as a revelation. Although true to Heidegger's sense, the significance of Caputo's change is analogous with the difference between the disciplines of etymology and morphology, the tracings of language and its production. Such a change emphasizes the ahistorical agency in truth production rather than the slavish historicity of

traditional, received knowledge, as Caputo continues: "*Alētheia* can never appear on the stage of history, not in the beginning, the middle, or the end, because it is the very staging, the *mise en scène*, of history" (520). This reveals the type of concealment which concerns Heidegger most, that sort of hiding-in-plain-sight, that which does not need to be dis-covered or uncovered but which inversely needs the light of observation shone upon it, so it can disclose itself. Instead of the spatiality of 'covering,' this new *ἀ-λήθεια* casts its revealing in Heidegger's terms as non-unthematic, the unthematic being not brought or moved in anyway, but recomposed as a theme, as that placing of an idea.

Under this reconception of *ἀλήθεια*, the spatiality similarly breaks down, but does so in just the way Heidegger suggests when he rejects the metaphorical positionality of truth, which he is, however, beholden to whenever he seeks to define the procession from unthematic to thematic. Although these terms in their contemporary meanings appear to forget any spatial organization, a look at their etymology reveals the physics of placement: a theme is a proposition, a placing of a *sententia*. Therefore, the physics of an *ἀ-λήθεια* of the unthematic is not an uncovering but a coming into place, the same definition Heidegger gives to the phenomenon.

In his essay "Heidegger and Duns Scotus on Truth and Language," Sean J. McGrath similarly argues for a recharacterization of the positions of Heidegger's concepts of truth: "*Alētheia* is prior to the distinction between truth and falsehood. The unconcealed being is directly apprehended" (341). This understanding of *ἀλήθεια* may be true to *voeῖv* or the judgment of vision, but in Heidegger's *ἀλήθεια* the unconcealed comes into meaning through beholding or discursive work, and such a path is not direct, for an immediate apprehension of being only

obtains if we ignore the medium of its apprehension—that is to say, this directness is after the fact of the indirection of concealment; and ἀλήθεια in Heidegger's phenomenological conception is the very fundamental context of being in concealment. What McGrath presents veers near to presenting only half a binary, the unconcealed without a concealer, for as Heidegger writes: "The idea of an 'originary' and 'intuitive' grasp and explication of phenomena must be opposed to the naivety of an accidental, 'immediate' and unreflective beholding" (*Being* 34/37). Heidegger does not offer a structure where truths other than perceptual modes reveal themselves without labour. The ἀλήθεια of phenomenology is a work: it is the name of a text produced on the naivety of forgetting, escaping, or obsoleting in the continuous concealment of being; or, in its proper hermeneutical sense, in the ἑρμηνεύειν of phenomena as text, in the continuous concealment of meanings in the givenness of λόγος, the secrecy of νοεῖν or apprehensive plain sight, it is the medium to transpose this immediacy or this ease of λήθη in the flow of language.

McGrath, however, goes on to mistake these same assertions of the 'immediacy' of truth in givenness, in small contradiction to his previous statement: "While he emphasizes the primacy of intuition in cognition, Heidegger holds expression to be 'equiprimordial' with intuition. Like all Dasein's experience, unconcealment is fundamentally and ineradicably mediated; truth only occurs within language" (342). If truth occurs only in language, then in Heidegger's "λόγος as ἀπόφανσις" (*Being* 210/219), speech as demonstration, ἀλήθεια as unconcealing is the distinction between truth and falsehood and the rift of mediation that limits the experience of truth. But McGrath reminds us of the *legomenal* mediation of being: "we live in language and have no access to experience that is not permeated by language" (342). If language is therefore the house of *truth* in which we dwell, the spatiality of ἀλήθεια changes radically from an unconcealing to

an enclosing. The discovery of the true being becomes an enclosure of that being, an enclosure in which the human knows by dwelling—a *linguistic* forest clearing. *Logical ἀλήθεια* as the sole locus of truth is, however, a direct contradiction of Heidegger's major planes of metaphoricity for the essence of truth: freedom, light, being. Indeed, Heidegger doesn't even go so far in "The Way to Language", as he writes: "Self-showing as appearing characterizes the coming to presence or withdrawal to absence of every manner and degree of thing present. Even when showing is accomplished by means of our saying, such showing or referring is preceded by a thing's letting itself be shown" (410). Phenomenal disclosure, i.e., freedom and light of a being, is clearly prior to any possibility of a *legomenal* disclosedness of a logical *ἀλήθεια.*

The foregoing have all been interpretations of *ἀλήθεια* in Heidegger's phenomenal sense, as though (t)his word were equiprimordial with himself. However, Heribert Boeder, in his book *Seditions: Heidegger and the Limit of Modernity*, inverts the Heideggerian construct of truth as phenomenal unconcealing, by arguing along Greek etymologies: "Ἀλήθεια has its place in the relations dominant in letting someone know something—where one is dependent upon the knowledge of another and at the same time is faced with the possibility that he who was questioned will prevent a participation in knowledge. Here, knowledge is based on testimony" (7). Thus, Greek *ἀλήθεια* as truth is not a contradiction of concealment, but one of lying, and the privative concealment in question is not phenomenal but *legomenal*, in things said: "*ἀλήθεια*: it has its abode in *λόγος* and thus in the latter's *πειθώ*, or persuasiveness—opposed to the possibility of deception" (Boeder 9). True or primordial Greek *ἀλήθεια* is not the truth of things themselves in self-showing but rather of a culprit 'coming clean,' so to speak, or of political being striving towards honesty against temptation. In this sense, Heidegger's positing of

ἀλήθεια in being or in nature characterizes these sources as mischievous rascals who either refuse to un-conceal the 'truth' of the matter in question or seek to persuade the listener of a deception. This non-Heideggerian ἀλήθεια is a purely social phenomenon of knowledge transmission; that is to say, Greek ἀλήθεια inhabits the realm of idle talk. Heidegger's mistaken derivation of phenomenal truth from the original Greek stands as a primary example of *apophantical* appropriation. In Heidegger's analysis of the statement in section 33 of *Being and Time*, he writes, "We call primordial the 'as' of circumspect interpretation that understands (ἑρμηνεία) the existential-*hermeneutical* 'as' in distinction from the *apophantical* 'as' of the statement" (153/158). The first and second 'as's which are the same grounded in the phenomenon correspond to Heidegger's proposed truth *as* unconcealment, while the third, sentential 'as' is the 'as' of truth as correspondence, that more political truth of the making of statements: thus, Heidegger's erosion of political ἀλήθεια in the presentation of its phenomenal invocation is itself metaphorical, a political rather than a phenomenal truth, the sentential correspondence of statement and personal fact. For Heidegger, the essence of truth is not to be metaphorical but existential; however, the Greek ἀλήθεια as a social bond or political comportment rather disrupts the existence of such an 'as' in truth and positions the 'as' of ἀλήθεια back into the correspondence of statement and fact.

Christopher P. Long echoes this sentiment in his book *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth*, where he argues that the realm of Greek ἀλήθεια is in Dasein-with:

> In ancient Greek epic poetry, ἀλήθεια is intimately connected to the domain of saying. The term itself seems to articulate a privation of λήθειν, which is an older form of the verb λανθάνειν, meaning to elude notice, to be unseen. In the middle/passive voice, λανθάνεσθαι takes on the meaning of to forget. Thus, ἀ-λήθεια involves not allowing something to elude notice or be forgotten. (26)

Thus, Greek ἀλήθεια has a number of senses which reveal the Greek importance of bearing

witness, testimony, remembering, and retelling. Each of these senses is deeply invested with the

trust and the credence of the other, and as such ἀλήθεια becomes a criterion for a social bond, a

law of Dasein-with. Long provides an example which explicitly *re-narrates* the meaning of

ἀλήθεια:

> Telemachus, in search of information about his father, Odysseus, insists, "Nestor,
> son of Neleus, you tell me truly [ἀληθὲς ἐνίσπες] how Agamemnon died and
> where Menelaus is," to which Nestor replies, "I will speak the whole truth [ἀληθέα
> πάντ' ἀγορευσω]." Truth as ἀλήθεια emerges first in such social, interpersonal
> contexts. It carries with it an intimacy of trust between the one who requests the
> truth and the one speaking it. (Long 27)

Telemachus is not on a youth-quest to the unconcealment of the self-concealing self-showing,

but is simply bidding Nestor not to dissemble on the facts. Dissemblance on the facts being the

vulgar conception of the criterion for truth, we can read the fragment of Parmenides Heidegger

provides us in a different light: the "stable heart of well-enclosing unconcealment" (*Parmenides*

9/14) becomes a simple moralism of the goddess Truth bidding the hearer keep an open heart,

which is as much to forbid lying in the service of trust: the metaphor of the open heart, the

unconcealment of one's ψυχή, the animal being revealed as presence to presence, transforms trust

into truth as an indexical radius of a *language in pain* performed upon modern English by

Ancient Greek. Such truth on testimony is inherently naive because the opening and closing of

witness and warranty are cognate or coterminous, and it is here in the metaphor of the heart that

the naivety of the conservation of secrecy and trust and its complement in the fluency of

disclosing translation originates: in the Heideggerian truth/trust collapse, where the fundamental

position of the of the 'well-enclosing heart' is such that it must be 'kept open', such that the heart

forms a boundary, door, or circuit, the hermeneutical labour of opening the door equals the labour and time of its libidinal closedness. There are consequently two superimposing energies in the production of truth, formed from the polarity of its disclosedness: the esoteric energy of encrypting in the conservation of secrecy, which produces the fecund field of truth potential, and the equal and opposite energy of disclosing translation, whose facility synthesizes metaphors on the potential field. Whereas the naivety of the immediacy of language always assuming an empty field of openness, this naive translation, the naturally constituted analogical structure of language, assumes or undertakes the craftwork of opening; but these openings are accidental, undirected, unpredictable on the field, and being unbound, unclosed in origin, such truth is thus unopened and unlocked by trust, for secrecy and naivety are the same access. As both naive labours (the secrecy and translation of immediacy) are equal, there are therefore two nativities: the obsolescence of a place slowly closing off and the analogy of the slow re-opening replacement, which form the winking transition or procession of any understanding and application of *ἀλήθεια* to the world of phenomena, are only erroneously separated. In the easy fading out and the easy fading in, respectively, the labour of phenomenal *ἀλήθεια* is facilitation.

Returning to Lakoff and Johnson, we can correct our surmise on Ancient Greek culture through the reading of metaphor as such: it was not, as Heidegger had led us to believe, an appreciation of phenomenal revelation and its concordant secrecy that motivated the Greek formulation of truth as unconcealing, but rather it was the spirit of trust or camaraderie in Greek society, a political figuration of truth as not concealing, not lying, not dissimulating, not holding back, but holding forth, displaying, testifying, discoursing openly. The fundamental metaphor underlying *ἀλήθεια* is not the opening forth of a processional unconcealing, but the status of

always having been uncovered: the contest of testimony undertaken in the open, from the

position of openness, assumed no more secrecy than silence. The contrast between language and

silence is not that between truth and secrecy, for the primal closedness in language is contingent

and unnecessary, its naivety being the birth of regulated noise. Heidegger's appropriation of

ἀλήθεια in the end turns out to be the opposite of the spirit of *ἀλήθεια* itself, a privation of not

deceiving, an *ἀν-α-λήθεια*, in the sense that he does not reveal for us the true original Greek

meaning, nor does he keep the tacit promise of trust in not spreading falsehood, in keeping

something present by keeping it un-forgotten, in staying in the open. Such arguments against

Heidegger, however, run the risk of overshadowing or concealing, indeed of *forgetting*, his

philosophical innovations on the original Greek concept. Thus, we are left with two *ἀλήθειαι*, so

to speak, one being the original Greek *legomenal* Dasein-with of truth invested with trust, the

other a Heideggerian appropriation of truth as phenomenal disclosedness to Dasein.

  These two *ἀλήθειαι*, political and phenomenal, tear out of language, as previously hinted,

secrecy and truth on the one hand, and silence and meaning on the other. As the being of

language is meaning, that is to say, that a language *is* insofar as it *means*, that something

participates and incorporates in language insofar as it means something else, where a 'meaning'

is an understanding governed and motivated by the regularity and definition of this determinant

thing, silence in the field of speech possesses a degree of nothingness, but the legendary oblivion

of plenary (indeed, baroque) ontologies requires this silence be meaningless, and in language, as

in speech, an absence is contextual, contingent, and thus as codetermined as response, as

understood or included in understanding as are the words surrounding it. Silence as absence of

speech or language (the one of closed mouth, the other of the closed word) is only nothing, or

life without meaning, if the closures of mouth and word first repel the overwhelming regrowth of natural language upon them and then overwhelm and overtake this themselves, changing its materialist significations into immaterialism. Because of the greatness of space it is easier to look out on nothing than it is to live in freedom from meaning: once in a significant system there is no spot of nothing. The repopulation of closed words or the unknown dead language (such as that of the writing system Linear A, the Minoan Language of Crete) is the liminal case of this, hiding where speech's monstrous child remains unfed, unheard, and clueless, with no Theseus in or Daedelus out, splitting hairs or entwining them. The sunlit, daybroken ἀλήθεια of the phenomena of language is that invasive heat of meaning which, brilliant even within the silence and indistinction of forgotten faraway cultures, threatens still with melting one's impressionable wax, were one to approach.

But language is not licentious in the impotent human importance of sex where orgasm and not conception reigns asymptotic, but rather it is fecund in the overlapping of life: the materiality of language doesn't cost it its future, and thus language never avoids proliferation. However well such material or biological metaphors capture the understanding of language, the workings of meaning are more akin to the transmission of radiation: the seeming freedom in its extension is simply the splitting of the atom and the quantum difference of the result, the energy of the change of meaning, of the equivocation of meaning, of the division of synonymy and metaphor, being the provision or extrapolation of procedural courses, momentous and massless. Holding to the curve of sound change laws and easing through the vice of analogy, meaning is therefore not free understanding; or rather free understanding is as meaningless as unregulated noise is without music: free understanding, the locus of the unknown mind or the mind outside

the camouflage of reason, is that combatted through the use of language. (The twentieth century preoccupation with hermeneutics explains the contemporaneous fascination with the frontiers of music, as evidenced, for example, in free jazz, and with the limits of all other arts and technologies, as well, in their dilapidations into the abstract and back again.) Meaning is instead militant thinking, and such regularity and definition render meaning nearly immediate in its transitive expanse: the type of understanding performed in meaning is so effortless as to seem transparent and lifeless or involuntary in the transition from one thing into another, where the sensation of meaning or forced understanding is so strong as to repudiate and replace the being of the senses that lend it oath and body, that police its transmission and allow its offence. This invisible vitality of language is its power and power to offend: one mistakes language in its average everydayness for an unchanging, unpossessed, unpurposive thinking, an understanding unimported, unborn from elsewhere, but grown as all sensation in reward of one's own being, (which gives offensive utterance its internal concretions, the inner experience of its insults;) and while its imposition of meaning is in fact militant in its ubiquity, in its inescapable overwhelming, in its deposition of and into the commonplace, one takes the commonsense as both one's own due and contribution. Indeed, its enforced *impossession* spurs one's guard rather against the plagiarist than in defence of its advance and defeat, and these speeches without borders are as many birthplaces of the interpellation of authorship and citation—Let it be known, I said it here first—that such moments of authority in language, the voice of the other in sound, syntax, and lexicon, are anxiously remarkable, not gestural but signatory: the spirit of the other moves upon the face of the waters, and in the beginning their motion is as one.

This militancy of language is none other than its ἀλήθεια or bond of trust; and (as Badiou translates it in *Being and Event*,) this "non-latency" (123) of the formidable militia of words accepts your resignation. Therefore, the only peaceful language is a dead one, for language death undoes this bond of trust by burying or rendering cryptographic the formerly imperious: the *aletheutical* becomes rudimentary Lethean. Once a language takes hold of one's understanding, a primary ἀλήθεια opens up, an enforced bond of trust with the phenomenal sense of language, one most akin to the naive relevance of worldly appearance; after this colonizing by the apprehension of regimented sound, a second ἀλήθεια begins, one less akin to the Heideggerian authority of world consciousness, but more like those bonds of trust legislated between testifying Greeks: the logical assertiveness of persuasive speech. It is this last ἀλήθεια that declines in dead language: it is there, in the enfolding of language death, that a latency develops, which prevents even the most committed or excited classicists from commuting into dead language their being in the immediacy of their conduct, their average everyday, because this ἀλήθεια of social bonding, a *religio publici*, does not surround and irradiate all of them, all whom they know, and all their knowledge. While dead language is still phenomenal and comes to presence and stands there, the other half of ἀλήθεια fails to work. Phenomenally, the sounds and shapes of dead languages still hold sway, still pretend to assertions, and beg and warn of meanings, but their threat is disorderly taken up by only a voluntary few, their form ghostly in the ghostliness of indecipherable screams or murmurs, their meaning obeisant to specialists rather than commanding the armies of people. This lessening or latency can be characterized as a loss of the fulfilment of meaning, a decline in the significant immediacy of speech, in the simple command of the being of others, in the expropriation of their knowledge, until meaning finally dwells entirely concealed, known only in

its ghosts, the quietus of illegible writing systems, or the language deceases and phenomenally is not.

The transition of the Greek-traditional understanding of *ἀλήθεια* as testimonial openness to its Heideggerian invention as phenomenal revelation justified from its poetic register in antique philosophies of creation is a change much like the concomitant Heideggerian inflexion of *Dasein* from its common parlance in German. These transitions or translations can be characterized by a cultivation of this latter latency: the losses of immediacy, command, and knowledge—this first change in meaning, a *mediating forth* of the medium to the diminution of one's grasp, to its arm's lengthening, being the most significant, because theoretical investigations have as their consequence in language a distancing from "primitive Dasein" for whom "the use of signs remains completely within an 'immediate' being-in-the-world" (*Being* 80/81). While the other losses accrue because of an abstraction from the society of patience that language informs and pacifies, the primary loss, this *mediation*, results from a certain paradoxy of the incorporation of knowledge: that for the specialization of a skill into an encyclopedic *τέχνη* or form of knowledge, in its passage through language, its common terms of reference must lose their commonality and become commodities, so that only words as specific as the knowledge is specialized can hold and interfere with its meaning; that is, there is a loss of references, of what the word *knows*, in order as it acknowledges the specialization, and this specifying commodifies the term, heightening its mediation, its interfacing with or interposition of world and skill. This paradox of mediation excuses the *latencing* of *ἀλήθεια* as it enters the commodious jargon of philosophical argument, its absence from the testimonial flare of social life, of being-with, and its

emergence into the handiness of a referential system designed to prove, motivated by the anxieties of proof and connectivity, of the syntax of equation and identification.

The problematical nature of Heidegger's phenomenological interpretation, his constant questioning, precludes the classic or naive translations and rather demands or incurs this commodifying of indexical translation, of a lexical or legislative re-incorporation which, in rewriting the letter of the law, in tattooing it, recreates the authority of the speaking body in the word appropriated, personalizing it: in answering the weight of these specific discriminations with non-ephemeral, genealogically viable formulations, indexical translation is thus carnal translation, as it preserves embodiment procedurally, multiply, while naive translation is progenitive, repossessive, descendant—the former a decadent and melancholic obsessional, the latter puritanical in its delegation. By this repossession, where the new effortlessly and seamlessly inherits the old, effacing, replacing, outdoing, language never materializes within one's reach, not admitting to human security, whereas the language conquered by the temporality of human voices, overwhelmed by the presage of its own power, stands forth in obloquy when recalled, anachronistic with human whims, the captor erstwhile holding sway now held captive. The dead ἀλήθεια of Greek camaraderie can no longer compel its own truth, but still it plies its utility, for now that it rules over none, it must work for one instead: "a present-at-hand logos must resemble something else present at hand—beings as the objects of the logos—and be directed by these" (*Introduction* 212/145). The dead language increases in materiality, in thingliness, corporation and technicality being the originals of enslavement: in the absence of its command, one takes command of it, where one's free understanding can pretend to dominion in a showcase word, even as both lose their freedom, losing the freeform repossession of the

sleights of neuron and brainstem, as well as losing the progenitive clustering of meaning in competition. While militant ἀλήθειαι shine forth, one could never overcome their collective power, but where either weakens, one voice attains to authority and to the assertion of its own image:

> one last, seeming glimmer of the original essence of *alētheia* maintains itself. [The present-at-hand comes forth into unconcealment, and just as necessarily, re-presentational assertion goes forth into the same unconcealment.] Yet the seeming glimmer of *alētheia* that remains no longer has the sustaining strength and tension to be the determining ground for the essence of truth (*Introduction* 212/145, original interpolation)

Heidegger identifies a division in series or genus of metaphysical definitions, where on the one hand, the λόγος is a gathering, a collecting, an organic coalescence of "the relation of one thing to another" (*Introduction* 138/95), their worldliness, and on the other, after a perversion of thought, after a regathering and triumph of overthinking, the λόγος surviving today "has long since been externalized into a faculty of understanding and of reason" (*Introduction* 195/134), when thus it with its grasp on language "relieves us of the trouble of asking elaborate questions about the essence of thinking" (*Introduction* 132/91) and so devolves proposal into proposition, as the worldliness of ἀλήθεια into handiness. The gathering λόγος is language as one encounters it in everyday discourse, in poetry, in a philosophy concerned with expression more than with proof, whereas this latter, assertive λόγος holds sway over all technological developments in language, slowly governing over into technocracy all discourse. The weighting of λόγος by ratio and assertion, the gravity of its submission to τέχνη, bends and makes compliant all future relationships of being in same arc. Thus, it is that with the gathering *logic* of Greek testimonial ἀλήθεια dead and laid latent, Heidegger's assertive *logic* of phenomenal ἀλήθεια revives the

sound and image through a type of undeadened meaning, a reminiscence or *revenance* which

precludes its naive translation as truth: "Insofar as a being as such is, it places itself into and

stands in unconcealment, *alētheia*. We thoughtlessly translate, and this means at the same time

misinterpret, this word as 'truth.' To be sure, one is now gradually beginning to translate the

Greek word *alētheia* literally" (*Introduction* 112/77-78); and which instead requires reparation to

the ἔτυμον, the true, real, or actual of the word, to remedy the modern immediate "unreflective

beholding" (*Being* 34/37). As the being of language is meaning, the mood of language death and

its imposition on the activities of meaning, its rendering handiness above worldliness but also its

dispersing immediate captivation, gives the jargonist control of the being of language, over what

language is insofar as it means, over its identities and predicates: "Suppose that there were no

indeterminate meaning of Being [as a word], and that we did not understand what this meaning

signifies[…]. *Then there would be no language at all*" (89/62, his emphasis, my interpolation).

Control over the "evanescent meaning" (90/62) of 'is' as a type of keystone word or the null set

from which all other meanings or beings of language pile up, gives one control over these

descendants and deductions, their ordering and understanding, the very nature under which they

are coordinated and that for which they are marshalled; the 'is' latent under all definitions, and

thus under all gathered, syntactical understanding, the word 'being' as a structure of functions

forms the ὑποκείμενον of or subtends the being of language or meaning itself—the fundamental

hypothesis of language being that one can say what is. Therefore, the power to dim the ἀλήθεια

of ἀλήθεια, to impose upon language one's own being, promises the philosopher the illusory

freedom from the dominion of language in the slight dominance of it, even as this freedom in

dominion is only in a word *ē plūribus ūnum*, the presidential one from many commanding and

bringing purpose to the discourse. In Heidegger's case, imposing his own being upon *being as word*, on the meaning of the structures of 'is', allows him a power just beneath that afforded the constructivist of artificial languages.

The technocratic covering or encoding of the being of a word, the removing of its meaning, its *ἀλήθεια*, is always an exertion over a particular word or a being, not over the Being (in translative Heideggerian titular case as the being of whatever is as it is) of the language or of language in general, not over (if we can appropriate translative Heideggerian titular case) Meaning as such or the meanings of a whole language, for such a case would ensure the wholesale destruction of language as *speech in tongues*, or would at best perform a constructed idiolect or private language, spoken on location, by characters, or in machines. This devil being in the details, the trick, so to speak, is incremental exorcism or covenantal conjuration. On the other hand, that is, non-technocratically, languages naturally cover over entirely, their *ἀλήθεια* naturally dimming or decaying historically, and thus we can speculate on the full condition of *aletheutical* loss and its regain, as for example in the case of Egyptian Hieroglyphics or the Linear B of Mycenaean Greek. Here, the project of deciphering begins before the beings of either language come forth as meanings; before one has logical, irrefutable evidence of its being language at all, one can nonetheless tell that it *is* language, that it *means*, however absolutely, that is, without an object of meaning. In a sense, we can vulgarize the difference in language between Being itself and beings as that between Meaning itself and meanings, and thus also as that between *Ἀλήθεια* and *ἀλήθειαι*: the coming into the light of meaning, that is, the imposition or imperative constituting the insistence of signs, that by which even unknown languages are recognized, and then their little truths. As Heidegger speculates on the *βίος* of the buildings of

social institutions, that "One can, as it were, smell the Being of such buildings, and often after decades one still has the scent in one's nose. *The scent provides the Being of this being* much more directly and truly than it could be communicated by any description or inspection" (*Introduction* 37/25-26, my emphasis), taking scent metaphorically, however ambiguous it is in the text, we can, in our vulgarization, repeat that in the institution of speaking or writing systems the scent provides the Meaning of these meanings much more directly; that is, simply being in sensorial presence of language proves its Meaning, that it does *mean*, even if individual or indeed all meanings are obscure.

In his paper on "The Ontological Difference," Graeme Nicholson determines that it, "in its latent form, is pre-cognitive, but it has become explicitly disclosed through philosophical thinking" (373), which is "a style of employing words, a particular application of reason, and its own possibilities for truth, that are autonomous to it, not borrowed from the sciences" (373). Precognition, prelocution, intuition, free understanding, all provide or obtain in some incommunicable sensorium of the Being of the cognized, the locuted, the intuited, the understood. The exercise of philosophy is the self-conscious dimming of language until this differentiation or *distantiation* reveals through its inverse displacement the absence of the truth of language: the εὕρηκα comes from the technical separation of Being and being in philosophical language, where in natural speech one falls prey to the rhythms of the two superimposed; where Meaning never falls out of speech, is never declared in an uncanny valley, and never sticks in one's throat, expletive or unable, it is until the meanings of words are timid, remorseful, dour, until the little beings of language squirm in the bracing of the old sounds, until the terms of philosophy are pale ephemera of the market place, that Meaning itself must return or is

summoned from the free understanding to make up the difference in a bent language, a lack holding sway in the power vacuum, in a martial law. Philosophy suspends the old laws to inspect them in their absence by appending new predicates to familiar subjects, and thus one teethes new likenesses in the twilight of pulled teeth, new identifications of what can be said and heard. In these suspensions of disbeliefs, one invites a combinatory of martial law and saturnalia in an algorithmical testing for the new or better, and in this combination of nascent meanings, their faintness or fragility in the evanescence of Meaning, Being is called forth to adjudicate their truth and existence: in the dimming of the lesser, political *ἀλήθειαι*, the light of apocalyptic capital *Ἀλήθεια* becomes measurable as that which fulfils a previously unknown or misunderstood, unguessable proposition or parable, not the coordination of each separable meaning but their transition into one, their being understood in other words and as one, wherein the phenomenal revelation of Meaning unfolds through and sustains the process of deciphering to brighten the little lights of deepened speech. It is capital *Ἀλήθεια* that conserves a language even as its lesser social contracts of indication, imperation, subjunction, inquisition, etc., are dishonourable, disintegral. Philosophy or any hypothetical language obtains in the pursuit of the limit (or in the imitation of the image, its reinvention,) of language death where, in the performance or excavation of the language gap, some discourses more, and some less, heuristically mark the difference: the mood of language death is thus the potentiality of Meaning, the possibility of its coming forth in the surprise of understanding.

The major philosophical mode of its coming forth, however, is the declaration on a term, the predication of a subject, in the occasion for accidence in the conjunction of things, which in terms of likeness, equation, or identity, these major structures of being related, requires the

restriction of being into the coherence of the copula. To expose the ontological difference,

Nicholson collocates the presence of the expression of being in language in the three functions of

the copula, in i.) the appending of predicative qualities, predication through being so or suchlike,

ii.) the asserting of identity, identification through predicate proper nouns, a type of equation

where the subject and predicate present from analysis, a formation distinguished by "the use of

two quite different logical symbols for" (360) predication and identification, and lastly iii.) the

exposing of existence, the deixis of finite Dasein, demonstration of presence through implication

of place, literal or figurative, as in "there is a crater on the moon" (360)—these three slowly

watching Heidegger's etymological unfolding of being as word, in first part of the second

chapter of *Introduction to Metaphysics*: the verb 'to be' (in both English and German a tripartite

verbal complex) can be etymologically analyzed into three forms, i.) living, from the root of 'is',

a verb showing sympathy with Nicholson's identification in that an identity purports one's life in

both social and animal senses, both *βίος* and *ζῷον*, ii.) emerging, from the root of 'be', from the

same verb as much yielding *φύσις* as well as future and feminine, sympathetic with Nicholson's

predication because of the synthetic nature of both becoming and proposing, and because of the

swelling entanglement of meaning from *legomenal φύσις*, that is to say, because predicates

emerge of a known thing, and iii.) dwelling, from the root of 'was', akin to the existential

placeholder of the 'there is' (*Introduction* 78-9/54-5). The tripartition separates out three tenses

of the verb, *is* as present, *was* as preterite, and *to be*, in both futural and abstract aspect, and it is

this last that, instantiating *φύσις* and the bearing the sojourn of the abstract infinitive, most

excites Heidegger(ians), for even though Nicholson makes these distinctions, he settles on

predication which is already the fullest expression of being in its ontological difference, since it

and emergence as a type of *φύσις*, as "the emergent self-upraising, the self-unfolding that abides

in itself" (*Introduction* 67/47), already contain the selfsameness and abidance of identity and

dwelling, already asserting the existence of existents through the implication of their identities,

even as they remove or refine into latency and ignorance the meaning of being as word by

increasing and improving its redundancy and therefore its grasp, its extension, its predicability:

as being is utterable in every discourse, since mere predication is possible or belongs to all

things, "these initial meanings have died out, […and] only an 'abstract' meaning, 'to be,' has

survived" (79/55). It is this horizon of stretching to equation or at least to mimesis, of

commensalist representation, of that "flattened out and rendered unrecognizable" (65/45), which

obliques and reproaches the meaning of being, in which we demand or nonchalantly assume a

sustained verticality the possibility of which Heidegger seeks by 'going deeper.'

The predicative genesis of meanings is a preconditional test-case for the identification of

beings, meanings inspiring hesitant, uncertain beings or merely blowing upon them, and thus it

being a lure for the bailout of evanescent Meaning, draws Being from obscurity; and dragging

obscurity with it, however far or into the light of whatever discursive difference and tension,

Being never attains a enough signification or restriction to satisfy itself and cease. The

propositional *λόγος* is a handy tool for *legomenal* Dasein to employ in the haphazard

dispensation of meanings to plumb the ontological difference: "A sign is something ontically at

hand which as this definite useful thing, functions at the same time as something which indicates

the ontological structure of handiness, referential totality, and worldliness" (*Being* 81/82). Such a

tool or presence-at-hand stretches out the being of *Ἀλήθεια* by encumbering it with a measurable

existence in the sensation of meaning, as "the abstract meaning that is left over" (*Introduction* 79/55), remarkable but unacknowledgeable.

III. *ΦΎΣΙΣ* AND MEANING-TOWARDS-DEATH

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, following on *Being and Time*, where Heidegger's fixation with the Greek falls not wholly (as in *Being and Time*) on ἀλήθεια and λόγος, he in addition divides out from being another companion concept, φύσις, the being of growth and fulfilment, which although commonly translated as *nature*, as the process of becoming, of birth, Heidegger etymologically refutes in a fashion after his disputation of ἀλήθεια: "Being as *phusis* is the emerging sway. In opposition to becoming, it shows itself as constancy, constant presence" (*Introduction* 138/96), "in processes [for example] in the heavens (the rising of the sun), in the surging of the sea, in the growth of plants, in the coming forth of animals and human beings from the womb. But *phusis*, the emerging sway, is not synonymous with these processes, which still today we count as part of 'nature' (16/11), which in "the Latin translation *natura*, […] really means 'to be born,' 'birth'" (15/10) for, however, instead of being momentous nature, "This emerging and standing-out-in-itself-from-itself may not be taken as just one process among others that we observe in beings. *Phusis* is Being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable" (16/11). Φύσις is not discrete, not one but all, not the development of (the apprehension of) things, but the way through which the possibility of (the apprehension of) things comes to be: mutual constancy and presence. For Heidegger, φύσις and λόγος are equiprimordial, for φύσις which stands in constant presence also "stands there in accordance with this constant Together", that is, with λόγος "the gathering

gatheredness" (*Introduction* 141/98), the relationship of being. Coming into presence, or *presenting*, means coming into gatheredness, or *togethering*, for presence *is* as it is gathered. Heidegger goes on to invoke his primary dependency, his visual stimulation, in his second dependency, the hierarchical metaphor of homogenized radical truth through etymological deepening and grounding: "Recently, the radical *phu-* has been connected with *pha-*, *phainesthai* <to show itself>. *Phusis* would then be that which emerges into the light, *phuein*, to illuminate, to shine forth and therefore to appear" (*Introduction* 78/54, original interpolation). His connecting *φυ-*, *φύσις,* to *φα-*, *φάσις,* perfects his conflating or *to-gathering* of being, of presenting, of seeming, shining, disclosing, informing, denouncing; for *φάσις,* itself conflating both *φᾶναι* (*to declare, affirm, make known*) and *φαίνειν* (*to shine, show, make clear*) and therefore collecting both light, substance, and knowledge in a term, binding the commonly distinguished language from reality into real demonstration, thus in short construes or consummates the tripartition of *ἀλήθεια*, *φύσις*, and *λόγος*. This foundational particle, however, does not simply extend to *φάσις* but has also been traced by other etymologists to "fēmĭna, ae, f. from fe-, fev-, = Gr. φύ-ω, to produce; whence: fetus, fecundus, faenus, felix; cf. Sanscr. bhuas, bhavas, to become; Lat. fi-o, fu-turus" (Lewis & Short). There is consequently a stretching toward a limit, a tense and a gender in *φύσις*, that of the '*yet to be*' but also the begetting, such that both the present and the future are filled through this paradigmatic extension of the present and thence into the syntagm of the future:

> Gathering is never just driving together and piling up. It maintains in a belonging-together that which contends and strives in confrontation. It does not allow it to decay into mere dispersion and what is simply cast down. As maintaining, *logos* has the character of pervasive sway, of *phusis*. It does not dissolve what it pervades into an empty lack of opposites; instead, by unifying what contends, the

gathering maintains it in the highest acuteness of its tension. (*Introduction* 149/102).

This maintenance is provisional, the present begetting the future, the sustenance of being and forwardness, such that Nicholson declares: "It is being itself that stretches us out" (369), bearing us into tense; or rather, it is, in his conception, our *being predicate* that stretches us *tenseward*. Our tensewardliness, so to speak, is thus the effect of emergence or *φύσις* through language, our self-clarification or *φάσις*: "being toward one's ownmost potentiality-for-being means that Dasein is always already ahead of itself" (*Being* 185/191).

In our discourse on language, this latter concept of *φύσις*/*φάσις* provides for what we might call the life of meaning, the living of language, its nature—the vital force of words *presenting* together and into all space, of meaning's maximal expanse and constant interconnectedness. (In a crude sense, *presenting* & *φύσις*, and *togethering* & *λόγος* are paradigmatic and syntagmatic, respectively, because while presence emphasizes the being there of any one thing, this singularity there is set off by a plurality of contingent affairs; whereas *presenting* & *togethering*, and *φύσις* & *λόγος* are diachronic and synchronic, again respectively.) To summarize in English these three major emphases with regard to language, we could say, that while *φύσις* is its prevalence, its necessary presence, and *λόγος* its convalescence, its staying contingent and together, *ἀλήθεια* is the magnitude of this currency.

The greatest effect of the dimming of *ἀλήθεια*, of a returning to latency, is the dying of a word's, of a metaphor's, of a language's *φύσις*, its suppression and manufacture, a retooling in the distancing of its encroachment upon and sensitivity to its surroundings. Therefore the mood of language death has the character of *distantiality*, and the role of *φύσις* in general discourse as

emphatic sustenance is to close the gap: "The more inconspicuous this kind of being is to everyday Dasein itself, all the more stubbornly and primordially does it work itself out" (*Being* 122/126). Without suppression, the life of meaning thus rushing to fulfil any emptied space, in the curiosity of significance to constrain each sound, a retarding of *φύσις* is consequently needed to maintain difference: "Publicness initially controls every way in which the world and Dasein are interpreted, and it is always right, […] because it is insensitive to every difference" (*Being* 123/127). In the being of Dasein, publicness and *φύσις* are not the same, the former being the determination of being-with in an authentic active sense, the latter the forcing in of publicity, a passive being-with or perhaps a being-surrounded-by; but in the being of language, however, *φύσις* impels one toward publicity in the swarming of common sense and idle talk, in the incessancy of speaking, a closing-in and pushing-out of language, pervaded and provided by an evanescent Meaning, whose very *abstraction* allows its descent, its ubiquity, its "leveling down" through averageness "all the possibilities of being" (*Being* 123/127), for "Dasein is essentially de-distancing" which "means making distance disappear" in "an active and transitive sense" (*Being* 102/105). The essential approach to meaningless of the copula, the existential quantifier, the *fiat* of extension and location, is the self-effacement, the *ressentiment*, the extenuation, of the mechanism of significance in immediate speech, that by which all priorities are averaged, made (to) mean, in the feasibility and commerce of everyday, not measured in the measuring *εὕρηκα* of Meaning, but told in the intercourse of meanings, such that "language in general is used up and abused, that language is an indispensable but masterless, arbitrarily applicable means of communication, as indifferent as a means of public transport, such as a streetcar, which everyone gets on and off. Thus, everyone talks and writes unhindered and above

all *unendangered* in language" (*Introduction* 56/38-9, his emphasis). As the φύσις of language is the presenting of meaning, the comprehensibility of language, its receptivity, reception, and persistence, the magnitude or brilliance of its ἀλήθεια is "the naming force of language and words; for words and language are not just shells into which things are packed for spoken and written intercourse. In the word, in language, things first come to be and are. For this reason too the misuse of language in mere idle talk, in slogans and phrases, destroys our genuine connection to things" (*Introduction* 15/11). Entangled, average language is safe, flat, and popular, but it is so not on account of public laziness but by the very mechanism or militarism of meaning, the essential nearness and opposition of Dasein whose basic struggle against and equalling in the apprehension of language, in νοεῖν which "involves this receptive bringing-to-a-stand of that which appears" (*Introduction* 153/106-7), makes itself mean and average, an equal for the enemy, for those multitudinous beings read and halted, and this levelled or "destroyed relation to Being as such is the real ground for our whole misrelation to language" (*Introduction* 56/39). The military of meanings commands one and demands to be that against which one measures up, and this lesser measuring is maintenance and constancy, the persistence of a language: "Confrontation does not divide unity, much less destroy it. It builds unity; it is the gathering (*logos*). *Polemos* and *logos* are the same" (*Introduction* 67-8/47). The unity of πόλεμος (*war, strife, struggle, jihad, Kampf*) and λόγος, the union of endeavouring to gather (or together) and its everyday failure, is the χάος of average entanglement, the chasm across which Dasein is inclined or interpellated to measure itself; but this struggle can be overcome or consummated *poetically* as well, a world-historical gathering-out as against the handiness of logical compliance, for "Against the overwhelming sway, [the poets, thinkers, and statesmen] throw the

counterweight of their work and capture in this world the world that is thereby opened up. With these works, the sway, *phusis*, first comes to a stand in what comes to presence" (*Introduction* 68/47) and across this χάος Dasein attains to the ontological difference, by an artisanal forcing-out of the *elan vital*, where φύσις paused and differentiated from its active, entangled being, like a skull held out in warning, stands forth in relief to reveal the anatomy of being.

Since this *memento mori* or meaning-toward-death of ontological language, its prophylactic monasticism, is the struggle won, the defeat of the apprehended, the authentic meeting of language, it is in this νοεῖν that both language and speaker grow toward equal and opposite limits, for "apprehending and that for the sake of which apprehending happens are the same" (*Introduction* 154/106). Thus, while the mood of language death is the habit of the hierarch, the depression of such profanity, it is the reverse, the collapse not of testimonial ἀλήθεια but of its phenomenal brilliance, that is the mood of language life: choosing the former mood, one intervenes on the growth or flow of natural language, closing oneself off from contemporaries but opening up and asserting personal freedom into the infinite emptiness of a deadened word, while they who choose the latter gain the most freedom and interpersonal intercourse in the least language, in only that language which forms as a crust on the immediacy of modern life. So it is that in order to overcome the destruction of Being, we must destroy the language that leads us there, its nativity, the naivety of life, perpetuating one destruction with another. Ontology is therefore death-driven, escapist, asymptotic, and its production of or relation to language, its possession, is driven to the death, to the cure of surplus meaning, to kill the free, autumnal exchange of significance deceased in root and soil.

The relationship to language of a speaker of this sort, of a meaner-toward-death so to speak, resembles the relationship to nature of Walter Benjamin's "Destructive Character" where nature "dictates his tempo, indirectly at least, for he must forestall her. Otherwise she will take over the destruction herself" (541). His object is to "make room" (541) and to keep "clearing away" (541), keep destroying, which for him "rejuvenates, because it clears away the traces of our own age" (541), destroying and keeping clear what would naturally refill. His position to language then is self-fulfilment, and while the philosophical man of destruction always "is exposed to idle talk" (542), he "has no interest in being understood. […]Being misunderstood cannot harm him. On the contrary, he provokes it, just as oracles, those destructive institutions of the state, provoke it" (542). Since "gossip comes about only because people do not wish to be misunderstood" (542), the philosophical man of destruction scorns polite and contentious modern meaning in favour of oracular stillness. "[H]aving the consciousness of historical man" (542), he purges from his language the traces of modernity, in order to outfit himself into history: "Some people pass things down to posterity, by making them untouchable and thus conserving them; others pass on situations, by making them practicable and thus liquidating them" (542). The philosophical man of destruction makes no trinkets of language, but makes of them an institution, passing on not the daft memorials of a rugged access with experience, but the vapidity of argumentation and a terminology to be interpreted and reinterpreted in an ever expanding clarity of ease and will, an emptiness rendered fulfillable by the practiced. All his conservation over language is just encouragement to make strange his own extension in it and, taking him out, to put oneself in, keeping liquid all the while in liquid reflection one's place of understanding and concern. In language, the philosophical man of destruction can never clear

away so much that he does not see himself: and because "the destructive character has the consciousness of historical man, whose deepest emotion is an insuperable mistrust of the course of things" (542), he "sees nothing permanent" (542) but "always stands at a crossroads" (542) as "reliability itself" (542) where he endeavours to bequeath his own nonfreedom, his own undoing, his captivation. Thus, while, on the one hand, for the philosophical man of destruction, in the modern or everyday conception, "the authentic philosophical naming power of the Greek word [φύσις] is destroyed" (*Introduction* 15/10, my interpolation) in a technocratic decadence "not only since modernity but since late antiquity and since the rise of Christianity, in the spiritual history of the West" (*Introduction* 152/105), a fall begun by the originary teaching institutions of the Athenians themselves, the idealist and realist pair, Plato and Aristotle, when they agreed on the "grammatical dissection" (*Introduction* 63/44) of language which precipitated, in the rise of "*onoma* and *rhēma*" (*Introduction* 63/44) as grammatical terms, the coming of λόγος to mean proposition, its becoming logic; then on the other, to reassume this prior authenticity destroys anew the modern authority, clearing way for one's own interpretation in the freedom of one's rigidity and restriction from the age, its gossip and evolution, as well as violating the dictum that "words and language are not just shells into which things are packed for spoken and written intercourse. In the word, in language, things first come to be and are" (*Introduction* 15/11). The being of language, however, is the being of the age. The φύσις of φύσις, therefore, died long ago, for what was begotten by φύσις, what came to be and is, changed through its own agency into the physics of today. Only by destroying the physics of a word can one take it from the lips of its pursuers and make it one's own or return it to some passed glory.

IV. Dead, Undead, and *Recollecting the Metaphoric* through the *Language in Pain*

In philosophically defining πέρας (*end*, *limit*, *boundary*, akin to πέρα, *beyond*, *further*) and τέλος (*end*, *fulfillment*, *authority*, akin to τελεῖν, *to consummate*, *execute*, and to τῆλε, *far*), Heidegger helps us to further position *the mood of language death as limitation* and its differential self-showing of Ἀλήθεια: "the self-restraining hold that comes from a limit [πέρας], the having-of-itself wherein the constant holds itself, is the Being of beings; it is what first makes a being be a being as opposed to a nonbeing" (65/46, my interpolation). The sense of limitation here is as containment, as regiment and maintenance, the limit *praeter qua non* of being that marks the transition from infinitude, and thus from the nothing, the nonbeing, that defines and demarks its becoming. This limit is, in some way, the border of death onto the wastes of nonbeing. While πέρας is that speciation or differentiation of definition, of becoming finite, "'end' [τέλος] means completion in the sense of coming to fulfillment" (65/46, my interpolation), towards which a being is and works, where the meaning of its being comes forth, in this end, which πέρας simply distinguishes, separating one meaning from another. Of these two restrictions, πέρας is external, forming the bounds of meaning for which τέλος, as internal, aligns the presentation. Working inseparably to form these segregations, "Limit [πέρας] and end [τέλος] are that whereby beings first begin to *be*" (65/46, his emphasis), the binary process of definition.

In parsing these two *ends*, Heidegger derives the end as the beyond, πέρας, and the end as the achievement, τέλος, whence we can make two deaths or directionalities of death, the pressing of death and pressing toward death, the confinement of death which is to live and the living toward death which is its achievement. That which we call the undead is the loss of this achievement: something, as thoroughly defined by death as any living thing, lives on out of time

toward nothing, not in the sense of toward its extinction but after it, toward the nothing whose boarder it has passed or removed. For language, writing is the first theft of this teleology; the second thief is the lexicographer: for the archaic, obsolete written word whose *φύσις* has reached this end, its *ἀλήθεια* shines on, albeit dimly, preserved by a dictionary but forsworn by immediacy. While the dead word naturally achieves its *τέλος*, the undead unnaturally achieves *πέρας* instead. While the dead language is complete, the undead language is replete: all that the dead language *is* remains in its preserved form, *ἀλήθειαι* twinkling, *φύσις* unmotivated and flat, whereas in the undead language anything and everything can be found or sourced. One can argue and produce anything one wants to about, for, or from an undead language because truth/trust and the possibility of meaning will still swarm, if sluggishly, the sounds and shapes (as they do for the living tongue) but there is no *φύσις* to direct or defend them, no *φύσις* producing and destroying them, measuring them in equality. Because they are simply fossilized *ἀλήθειαι*, all the organic life of moment compressed and transmuted into a substance uncanny to the age made aware, no *λόγος* gathers them and for this reason they usually appear piecemeal, as names for concepts or new scientific entities, tools, places.

The effect of *φύσις* on *ἀλήθεια* is to problematize its security, stability, and stasis, without any discontinuity, but rather with continuous moment *φύσις* harvests *ἀλήθειαι* in order to "make manifest a *poikilia* <diversity: *Timmaeus* 50d> of directions of meaning" (*Introduction* 73/51, original interpolation). Its effect on Indo-European languages was to grow a *ποικιλία*, a diversity or variegation, in the heart of the clause, the verb form which, as it hosts an intensity and potential of difference, shows the most entangled meanings in its finite or restricted form: "This is why it is called an *enklisis paremphatikos* [*predicative inclining*, the declarative sentence, the

conjugal form of the verb], a deviation, which *is* capable of making manifest *in addition* person, number, tense, voice, and mood. This is because a word as such *is* a word to the extent that it lets shine forth (*dēloun*)" (*Introduction* 73/51, original parenthesis and emphasis, my interpolation). Within the emergencies of *φύσις*, *πέρας* defines the *ἀλήθειαι* of a word while *τέλος* delineates their execution, accounting for their exactitude, and this fullness of coordinated and defined *ἀλήθειαι* is the magnitude of clarity or revelation of the verb, its *δηλοῦν* (to manifest or exhibit, to make clear). In contrast to the conjugated verb, however, Heidegger contends that in the infinitive "The meaning is pulled away (ab-stracted) from all particular relations. In this abstraction, the infinitive offers only what *one represents to oneself* with the word in general" (*Introduction* 74/51, my emphasis, original parenthesis). In the absence of the *ποικιλία*, in the absence of restriction as the course and manifold of meaning, one is left to their own impediments, their own impositions, without the assistance of speech or speakers in general. This personal freedom but social loss in the infinitive Heidegger terms the "substantivization of the verb" (*Introduction* 61/42), where the verb's meaningful impact is reduced from its calling power and materialized or utilized into the handiness and seeming objectivity of the noun. Thus, *infinition* is the ultimate in privation and restriction, a singularity or idiot asceticism that, by destroying verbal *τέλος*, the directive of its embodiment in meaning, scatters what meanings adhere beyond the *πέρας*, beyond the beyond, where the infinite is bounded in the most freedom, one's own delinquency.

Words most at risk for this type of assumption are the weakest few whose brave meanings have already fled, those having *achieved πέρας* instead of *achieving τέλος*. Outside of this sort of infinite hollowing out of dead language, its hallowing as undead, there is, as M. A. K. Halliday

describes, a process of "substantivization" (a specific instantiation on the verb of a more general process of the battle over surplus meaning) as what he calls a type of "grammatical metaphor", where one *part of speech* is transmuted into a different *part of writing*, so to speak, chiefly in scientific discourse: "I began, as a way into the languages of science, with metaphors of nominalization: those in which a process, congruently construed as a verb, is reconstrued metaphorically as a noun" (107). Thus, *εἰμί* (*I am*) is nominalized into *εἶναι* (*to be*) but also into the substantiation of the participle *τὸ ὄν* (*the being*) which regardless of what Heidegger contends he employs grammatically as a noun: thus also is Dasein personified, prosopopoeic. In contrast to nominalization, nomination is "historically prior: in the grammar's construction of reality, the mapping of *process into verb* and of *entity into noun* precedes the mapping of *process into noun*" (107, emphasis added for elucidation). This specific grammatical metaphor of nominalization "turn[s] out to form a recognizable syndrome, one that is diagnostic of a certain type of highly valued, authority-laden discourse" (104) which in "condensing large amounts of lexical material inside nominal groups" (108), "progessively accumulates" (116) or rather, one could say, forcefully amasses ever increasing density and specificity of meaning, switching out the naturally occurring *phusic ποικιλία* (of an instantiated contextualized clause) for a personalized (however impersonally instituted) *technic σύνθημα* (*a covenant*, *watchword*, *synthesis*, *sign*).

The metaphor obtains "between nominal and clausal" (108), between a modernity and an antiquity, a maturity and naivety: "the grammar of our mother tongue is clausal" (130), because it is through writing that the compression of the nominal group, the degree of pause and understanding required for this compression, and the compressed mortality and tense of a science

disjoined or universalized from the history and embodiment of its thinkers obtain their hold

against the regrowth of significance and difference, against the entropy and inflation of speech:

"Practically nothing remains, in the nominal group, of the explicit signalling of semantic

relations that is present in the structure of the clause" (131). It is therefore not so much an

accretion of meaning as a refinement or an acceleration, an expedience against the excess and

access of the finite verb, an embalming and a gathering of the specified organs of other words

and clauses by and for the press of time. The *infinition* of grammatical metaphor, the emptying

out that fulfils, this process from reification to deification, gives one permission outside of time,

to escape the period in the offing, a license in degree with the slow decay of the printed and

electronic worlds in their deep retention. Thus, while "the grammar of spoken language construes

a world that is fluid, transitory and without very clear boundaries, just as speaking itself is fluid,

transitory and without very clear boundaries" (120), "The grammar of written language construes

a world that is solid, lasting and clearly bounded, just as writing itself is solid, lasting and clearly

bounded. *The nominalized world looks like a written text*" (121, my emphasis). The nominalized

world is one wherein "everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to

stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering" (Heidegger, "Question" 322), a

world of queues, check-outs, security, and procedures, a world of the letter of the law to which

one has access through only the proper syntagmatic relations. The nominalized are consequently

a type of standing-reserve, a linguistic reservoir of compact meanings, subordinant and waiting,

"no longer stand[ing] over against us as an object" (322). Through ordering, the orderly become

more like the things they order: such a speaker, writer, thinker, listener in nominalization, in the

loss of their clausal tongue, "is made subordinate to the orderability of" (323) language, "so that

a set configuration of opinion becomes available on demand" (323). The nominalized are infinite

and ahistorical so that the progress of discourse may pretend to predominance. Its condensation

of time which at first makes it slow is that momentousness by which it picks up speed, for only

in a medium as slow as the noun can one erase the pressure of time, pretend to its cessation, and

with its pressing gone skip whole moments of ideation: as a type of linguistic time-travel, such

dense nominalizations stretch the predicated subject not tenseward but rather *caseward*, so to

speak, not into a relation of time in tense, but into a distribution of rank in affect. (Thus the

syntax of nominalized law can acknowledge one's age while ignoring one's lifespan.)

This tenseless nominalized world therefore governs in a degree of lifelessness, which

alerted Heidegger to its pusillanimity: "In all its areas, science today is a technical, practical

matter of gaining information and communicating it. No awakening of the spirit at all can

proceed from it as science" (*Introduction* 54/37). In the violence against the clausal tongue, in

the technical compression of scientific discourse, the λόγος of speech as gathering becomes the

λόγος of writing as reasoning, whose syntax of meaning, of φάσις, is not collective, but

substantive, not enumerating, but summary, and seeks to present φάσις not as the illuminating,

emergent flow of meaning outward and onward, centrifugal, but as the standing stratification of

specificity inward and deeper, centripetal, gravitational. Nominalization aims to carve out in

syntax the shape of the specified in the form of its specification, its idea in print: when "logos

itself [as reason] makes itself into the court of justice that presides over being" (*Introduction*

198/136, original interpolation), when λόγος gathers not through collaborative interrelation but

through the hegemony of its own image, when gathering thus becomes the compression of

additive reason, of deductive rationalization, into a synthesis, a σύνθημα, a coin, "the word *idea*,

eidos, 'idea,' comes to the fore as the definitive and prevailing word for being

(*phusis*)" (200/137, original parenthesis); and the nominal group then buries the being of the

clause, the most *phusic* and changeable aspect of the sentence and that by which ἀλήθεια most

shines, buried under a new grammatical figure covering over the emergence of meaning with the

appeal or semblance of truth as correspondence: "The truth of *phusis—alētheia* as the

unconcealment that essentially unfolds in the emerging sway—now becomes *homoiōsis* and

mimēsis: resemblance, directedness, the correctness of seeing, the correctness of apprehending as

representing" (206/141). The nominalization resembles the verbalization in reference but

homogenizes it into the most numerous part of speech in scientific discourse, leveling down the

kinetic energy of the clause for the potential of direct reference in the nominal group, medially

heating the language. In nominalization, the vast expanses of φύσις move in a mere controlled

combustion, in a slow burn of over-regulated or oppressed meaning. In this sad reduction, all

things, made so ready and equal, easily thus enter into predication: "Truth, which was originally,

as unconcealment, a happening of the beings themselves, and was stewarded by means of

gathering, now becomes a property of logos. In becoming a property of assertion, truth does not

just shift its place; it changes its essence" (207/142). Truth becomes a property or inhabitant of a

predicative architecture whose function is the naive ease of housing meaning, of letting dwell

within our confines just those values of language we hold.

Since if all forms are expressible into nouns, all scientific utterance may take the same

shape, use the same reusable structure, and differ only in the reference and appearance of its

nouns or contents, there is therefore an essential difference of production or response, of activity,

between the nominal and clausal orientation to language; the former, through its formal infinition

able to compress and store anything, builds as though it were land and scaffold, while the latter

rather grows out not from the surface of things but between its entanglements or affairs.

Borrowing from Marshall McLuhan, we can say, that the nominal "extends one single sense in

'high definition'" (39), but it is not the material sense of sight or sound so extended, but rather

the *grammatical sense* of the noun. The grand dynamic of φύσις and the swelling of its reciprocal

emergencies—epitomized in the argument, where, in fighting one another, the quarrellous cannot

also fight against the verb, and in the lingual drift, whereby language presses on without

engagement—slow and cool in the written, in the obedient discourse where one takes charge of

the flow and change of language, (where in a discourse without parentheses and stylized

hesitations, nor with an affectation for the rotund and long in sound, for all that fills the drooping

mouth and drives it, one avoids the problems that lead language on,) whereas in the specificity of

the nominal form the grammatical intensity heats up equally or nearly to the energy lost in the

reusable disposability of nominalized predication: the energy, one could say, gravitates toward

the density of the noun, drawn from all else. (The rhetoric of a baroque writerly style,

distinguished here as attributive rather than predicative, as clausal, adjectival, adverbial rather

than nominal, can be seen as a rekindling of a necessarily cooled grammatical φύσις or intensity,

that expansion rather than extension of the language, such that even in the heat of the alphabet

writing can cool the flow of language just as the incursion of cold speech can rekindle the

dullness of continuous, laboratorial copulation). In science while the clauses are cool, the nouns

are hot, and this heat is inherently problematic in that it burns away one's presence or identity, a

hot medium that sears and consumes one's agency, fed by and filling this loss: "Intensity or high

definition engenders specialism and fragmentation in living as in entertainment, which explains

why any intense experience must be 'forgotten,' 'censored,' and reduced to a very cool state before it can be 'learned' or assimilated" (40). Thus, not only must one "unpack" scientific grammatical metaphors after regaining one's presence of mind, but the very orientation which creates them, scientific copulative predication, can be seen as an attempt to cool, censor, or forget the powers both of lingual drift, the driving of *φύσις*, and of the immediacy of meaning, the continual reshaping sheen of *ἀλήθεια*, its wide birth. Cooling them by extending the grammatical sense of the sentence into the hybridized, hot heatsink noun, science can allow participation in its cool discourse while prohibiting any disagreement over its hot things.

Both Heidegger and Halliday assert that this process of increasing ratiocination occurs from the stages of the "transformation of Being from *phusis* to *idea*" (Heidegger, *Introduction*, 206). Halliday says of the transition from *ποιέω* (*I make*) to *ποιητής* (*maker*) to *ποίημα* (*thing made*) to *ποίησις* (*making*), that since the second and third "have moved […] little away from the concrete, […] they are [only] transcategorizing derivations rather than metaphors" (134). Halliday misses this opportunity but they are, we could say, *grammatical metonymies* rather than metaphors. Terms of the fourth type, however, such as *ποίησις*, "are metaphoric—they are **names** of processes ('a making', 'a doing'). It was this last type that provided the resource for key terms in Greek science, like κίνησις 'motion' (later also κίνημα), φύσις 'nature', βλέψις 'sight'" (134, his parenthesis and emphasis). This stratified metaphoresis is a natural power and result of the grammar: "These metaphorical 'things' appear at the very beginning of science—except that they show that science has no beginning: it is simply a continuation of the grammar's theorizing of human experience" (134). Science is thus not only a body in language, a corpus, but also *a* language, an orientation to language, its being-taken-up, its handiness, as well as a responsibility

of language. The sentience and sapience of science is predominantly *phusic*, built not upon the enlightenment of ἀλήθεια but within the recombinations of language change: "grammatical metaphor was critical to the development of scientific discourse—and ultimately, therefore, to the development of science itself" (123). Provisional nominalization, resorted to in the course of a syntax, "is a syntagmatic process, in which a metaphoric entity is created for discourse purposes; and it can always be unpacked" (127). Unpacking these quick hot nominals involves translating them into the cool clausal form of speech, which consequently involves allowing in the heated dynamic of the emergency of language, φύσις, and the variegating verb.

While we term the type of general grammatical metaphor that empties out *infinition*, and although it need not be the nominalization of a verb into a noun or substantive infinitive, it most often presents as this, in naming things not so much into being as into meaning. We can take from this more general process of infinition and from Halliday's grammatical metaphor, and propose a type of *lingual metaphor* wherein, instead of grammatical forms, languages themselves and their sponsorship of meaning are the prize or object of relation. Lingual metaphor obtains between two previously divergent languages, this written within and that dead, unspoken, unconcerned, whose distance keeps them discrete and whole in their own congruence, internally harmonious and in agreement, each part lying with its other and upon the world as in a context, undisturbed until their two separate ontologies of meaning are collided, until the meaning of one is brought under the hegemony of the other. The determinant and necessary history dissolves in the conflict between these hegemonies of meaning where, in founding the dissolution of world-historical language death, the spoken seeks to change the unspoken and secretly accepts its renovation by it. This progress from or obviation out of history is itself each time historically

predicated: "Spoken language will always have priority, because that is where meaning is created and the categories and relations of experience are defined" (Halliday 120). While the present is always the crucible and arbiter of meaning, that for which dead language still *is*, the mood of language death naturally accrues from the soft unwriting or multicultural reincorporation of this history. From superimposing meaning- and being-toward-death, the tenseless nominalized language is a *language in pain*, and its tenseless nominalized world can never fully leave or fully encompass the metonymic gap without obliterating meaning and thereby ending itself, bringing itself into the completion of its meaning-toward-language-death. Although a *grammatical* metaphor, the *language in pain* is only a *lingual* metonym, for it builds upon connections it reveals; in the erasure of these *logic* connections (the gathering of *λόγος*) to language, it would further repeal its regulated meaning and become a *language in pain* in pain, the undead language of pain hiding pain.

I have written much about Heidegger's *ἀλήθεια*, et al., but another less determined example involves the invention of the word *Chromosom* in German, by Wilhelm von Waldeyer-Hartz in 1888, from *χρῶμα* (*colour both of skin and in general*) and *σῶμα* (*body*), to describe the microscopic forms observable during cell division, so named because they were easily dyed and therefore discovered, that is to say, that they were named for their coming to appearance as little bodies of colour. The term **χρωμασωμα* or **chrōmasōma* thence belonged to science, but, directed and defended by no *φύσις* and incorporated into an only perfunctory and technological *λόγος*, inhabited no strict language but circulated the languages of the biologists describing it. Chromosome, spelt and pronounced with minimal difference across these languages, thence transcended translation: 1.) Because its meaning depended upon no other sequences of meanings,

it was thus purely paradigmatically linked to an observation; 2.) because its morphology was entirely disposable, named after its only known quality, it could then easily have been renamed for some other distinct and important property discovered, using the same orientation to language of its initial nomination; 3.) because of this provisionality, its formative, originary words are also emptied of meanings, such that since neither *χρῶμα* nor *σῶμα* refer to the skin colour of/or the human body, their combinatory meaning is not to be read from its morphology. The word's composure simply cites a moment of its history, a signature of the science of the day. Were the word's meanings, references, or uses to be deduced from or at least encoded, analytic, in its form (as in *ἀλήθεια* as unconcealment), its compounding would be an example of *language in pain*, a *lingual metonym*, an association composed of meanings from different languages, where each morpheme reads out its position, station, and function in the syntagmatic word constructed, if for example black chromosomes were the commodity of the transatlantic slave trade or if one could say the chromosome of a lake were blue but of a pond were brown. It would then not transcend, but rather persist and work because of, indexical translation, and so notwithstanding its coming into existence through this connection, it is what we call instead a *lingual metaphor*. *Ἀλήθεια* as *unconcealment as truth*, and the philosophical converse truth as unconcealment, as revelation, are equally lingual metaphors, since the quality of the connection is assertive rather than associative, that is to say, that truth is unconcealment because its occurrence is like a revelation, because the social association of a metaphorically open heart slowly wears off through subsequent associations (the opening up of the world, phenomenal unfolding), that through making a metonymy of or *metonymizing* a metonym, Heidegger makes a metaphor that erases the associations, replacing them with an image or likeness. As "metonymies are critical links

between everyday experience and the coherent metaphorical systems" (Lakoff 40) that organize

and support these self-references, the effect of *ὁμοίωσις*, of likeness or assimilation, in lingual

metaphoresis is the paraphrase or retranslation of the *language in pain*, the unlinking and

collapsing of it back into metaphor, so that, as tortured language always on the verge of death,

tethered as an index, it need only have its lifeline severed to lose its "referential function" of

standing-for (Lakoff 36) for the symbolic one of *standing-forth*, a displacement re(dis)placed so

as to extend in high definition not the grammatical sense of a noun but the lingual sensation of

indexical translation, to extrapolate the *language in pain* to its conclusion, and let its larval

squirm metamorphose accordingly. This conclusory replacement seems to erase the priority of

speech, the primacy of the modern language it devalues: "Because the *idea* is what really is, and

the *idea* is the prototype, all opening up of beings must be directed toward equaling the

prototype, resembling the archetype, directing itself according to the idea" (*Introduction*

206/141, italics in the original signifying transliteration of *ἰδέα*). Thus, undead language gathers,

compresses, and replaces the meaning of its modern tongue, untethering its metonymy, just as

the disjunction between *φύσις* and *λόγος*, the creeping of *λόγος* as assertion, represses the

meaning of Being. While the congruent grammar construes and its metaphorical grammar

reconstrues, the congruent language institutes and its metaphorical language reinstitutes: "The

congruent is how the grammar **construes** our experience, the metaphoric is how it **re**construes,

with various intermediate forms of wording along the route" (Halliday 132, his emphasis in

bold); the metonymic of either form, however, bridges this congruence and metaphoresis as a

type of contiguity, the adjacent not construing or instituting, but continuing, performing,

heralding: the metonym is the functor which extends in the extension of the sense. This is why

the *language in pain* can be both a grammatical metaphor and a lingual metonym, because

although it rewords one language, it does not yet remean another: for in grammatical metaphor,

"the new noun is not simply a rewording; it is a remeaning, the creation of a new theoretical

object in which are condensed both the historical value derived from observation and reasoning

and the systemic value derived from functioning within a conceptual scheme" (126). Though the

rewording of a language displaces its being, the remeaning of a language replaces it; and the

extension of displacement which is a replacement, at first is hot in its incongruence, but

eventually it cools as it naturalizes the purveyance of Meaning.

  To clarify, we can represent *metonymizing* a metonym through the use of simple symbols

as {A←B←C}, where {A} is a metonym of {B} and {B} is a metonym of {C}, the backwards

arrow signifying metonymy, the converse of which is metaphor; and therefore the possibility

exists for the middle association {B} to be forgotten and leave {A←C}: for example, {A}

unconcealment or uncovering is associated with {B} being open or non-dissimulative, generous

with one's feelings, and {B} this generosity or absence of disguise is thence associated with {C}

telling the truth (and from here, with {D} the truth itself), reading {A←B←C(←D)} or

{Unconcealment ← Magnanimity ← Trust (← Truth)}, and condensing to {A←B←C(←D)}

⇒{A←C(←D)}⇒{A→(D)}, reading that the truth is in its telling which is to unconceal, and

conversely that unconcealment comes to mean truth. Or again, in a more Heideggerian inflection,

{A} *ἀλήθεια* in English or German should properly mean {B} truth (as it is defined in all Greek

lexicons) which from Greek etymology and societal context is associated with {C}

unconcealment in social intercourse which, as concealing is itself primarily a visually process, is

again associated with {D} revealing (in) reality: thence, {A←B←C←D}⇒{A→D}, *ἀλήθεια* in

modern philosophical language is phenomenal revelation, through the erasure or *λήθη* of these

interstitial associations. We can term this process of restoration, of unfolding a metaphor, so to

speak, as *remetonymizing* or *recollecting the metaphoric*. So it is that metaphor, though not

necessarily technical or mechanical, is in fact incongruent, unnatural in language and,

disconnected from the sequence of associations that compels it, must assert resemblance over

this decoupling, over the associations it scattered. Thus incongruent, metaphor stands out not

only with a presence greater than the handiness of mere association but as the sequential

compression of handiness into worldliness, the condensation of continuous coolness into

discontinuous heat, as in the sequence of grammatical metaphor compounded of grammatical

metonymy: {*φύσις* (*growing*) ← *φῦμα* (*growth, thing grown*) ← *φυτόν* (*grower, plant*) ← *φύω* (*I*

grow)}⇒{*φύσις → φύειν*}.

The difference between the condensation of metaphor and the collection of metonymy is

the difference between undead language and the *language in pain*. Indeed, figuratively, further

torturing a *language in pain* or killing it produces an undead language, as in the case of

chromosome: {Chromosome ← *chrōmasōma* ← *χρώματος σῶμα* ← little bodies of colour ← the

easily dyed compressed proteins of cell division ← protein-rich DNA}⇒{Chromosome →

compressed histone DNA during cell division}, or in abstraction: {Undead language ← *language*

in pain ← indexical translation ← description ← observation ← designation}⇒{Undead

language → designation}. It is through this unwriting, elision, or ellipsis of the intervening steps,

through the reversal of the arrow, that the metaphor so constituted also begins to die: "The

metaphor power of the grammar [or, in our case, of the *language* as such] makes it possible to

bring new semiotic 'things' into being through the unfolding of text. In the process, the metaphor

ceases to be a metaphor; if we borrow the analogy from lexical metaphor, it is 'dead'" (127, my

interpolation). Eventually, the metaphor in undead language, assimilated and servile to its

purpose and speakers, ceases to demand explication to be understood, to wait to cool and

recompose, and thus completes the process of designation by erasing not just the intervening

metonymy but all lexical indications, destroying the Greek meanings of *χρῶμα* and *σῶμα*, or of

ἀλήθεια, effacing even the alphabet. In this meaning-towards-death, the drive to the greatest

facility of language, its ownmost potentiality in the dying of its metaphors, their cooling into

materiality and near nonsense, "these metaphors can no longer be unpacked" (127), that is, that

forasmuch as they provoke no argument or deconstruction, they seek to quietly escape the

language of things in a materiality all their own, becoming the real they impinge and reflect

through the destruction of their ownmost potential, their meaning power. It is this destruction,

this loss of heat that Heidegger seeks to undo with his retranslation, his *remetonymy*, his

recollecting the metaphoric *ἀλήθεια*. With every loss in significance, dying metaphors become

less like language: the less they mean, the more they are. Undead language beckons to us the

quick route to this discipline of meaning, for as a resource it abounds in low-meaning sounds and

shapes; being all but the absence of meaning, undead language makes most expedient dead

metaphors. Every dead metaphor so composed, however, comes with an equally easy route to

resurrection, to undead metaphor. This is the status of Heideggerian *ἀλήθεια*: a recollected,

rekindled undead metaphor.

V. DASEIN, DISENTANGLEMENT, AND DEATH

Loss of significance objectifies the word: "Words accrue to significations. But word-things are not provided with significations" (*Being* 156/161), and this objectification makes the lone sign vulnerable in this spotlight, forming of it a treasured bauble (as the keepsake or memorial value of a child's name), a game piece or password (as the positive or obligatory value of a playing card), or a promissory note (as the marketability or exchange value of a currency). From this objectification we distinguish these three archetypal vulnerabilities in designation: nomination, necessitation, and equation. Each, a *disentanglement* from the corpus of meaning, is the result of a process we can define as *de-significanc*e. When a sign confronts (or is confronted by) its inherent meaninglessness, its ownmost potentiality (namely, that it might not mean), this anxiety empties out its everyday engagement with other words, sets it apart in an illusory or experimental precedence, and fills this vacuum with a 'one to one' relation with its new purpose. The designified word becomes anathema to its language, tragic hero or sacrificial victim. Take, for example, my own name, Tyler, a name whose meaning no one I have asked has ever been able to guess. Ironically, the name's meaning, though old, is implied by the sound it still maintains. One need simply pronounce it with three syllables instead of two—Ty-l-er—or update its spelling from early modern 'y' to contemporary 'i'—tiler. Nonetheless, the designificance of the word as nomination prevents one from considering it as a significant term; it has no meaning but to de-signate, to point to one of many boys born in the 1980s, and only to one of them at any one time, the temporality of this designation being universally singular: 'For everyone and all time, me and me alone.' The switch in the mood of meaning between tiler and Tyler, the change from universal singularity to particular ubiquity, from the living language of the descriptor to the

dead language of the designator (notice how all traditional proper names are language dead, either literally from a dead language, Biblical Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, etc., or unrecognizable in the language they're from) is a switch across the signifier's differential of translatability: designificance is untranslatable. No German would think to call me *Fliesenleger*; such a thought would not even occur in the immediacy of everyday language because of the strength of the name's designificance. In fact, playing such a game of disrespect against designificance and translating a name into another language and back {Tyler⇨tiler→*Fliesenleger*⇢*Dachdecker*→ thatcher⇨Thatcher Nash} both perverts the ease or surrounding availability of significance—its freedom to allow for change, to always make more room for itself, to be constantly busying with and immersed in innerworldly meanings—in that the significance or meaning of the name would then become the true denomination (that then I am not in fact "Tyler" but rather am called by any "layer of tiles", named in meaning alone); and inverts the onus or sounding depth of designificance, its duty to lie dead or in wait, for all or the rest of language to pass over, its drooping down to earth—an experiment thus substantiating the sign's differential of translatability: significance is translatable, while designificance is transferable.

      In the preface to his *Dictionary of Indo-European Concepts and Society*, Émile Benveniste writes, "What concerns us is the connection, difficult to account for, between an expression of authority such as *hēgemṓn* and the verb *hēgéomai* which means 'to think, to judge.' In so doing we explain the *signification*, leaving to others the problem of the *designation*" (*Dictionary* xxiii, his emphasis). Here, signification is the structure within which a sign presents itself, that wherein morphemes combine and control, the intensely normal interweaving of meanings; from this structure, designation represents a type of breach or escape,

an interjection or disturbance by materiality. Our own terms significance and designificance we

define on this complementarity or opposition: designificance is the hollowing of the sign, its

disburdening and escape of significance, of the hegemony of meaning, in preparation for its

becoming real, its entering the hegemony of beings. This sort of horizontal mutual hegemony is

akin to Heidegger's entanglement:

> Dasein is initially and for the most part *together with* the 'world' that it takes care
> of. This absorption in … mostly has the character of being lost in the publicness
> of the they. As an authentic potentiality for being a self, Dasein has initially
> always already fallen away from itself and fallen prey to the "world." […] What
> we called the inauthenticity of Dasein may now be defined more precisely
> through the interpretation of falling prey. […] Inauthenticity does not mean
> anything like no longer being in the world, but rather it constitutes precisely a
> distinctive kind of being-in-the-world which is completely taken in by the world
> and the Dasein-with of the others in the they. Not-being-its-self functions as a
> *positive* possibility of beings which are absorbed in a world, essentially taking
> care of that world. This *non-being* must be conceived as the kind of being of
> Dasein closest to it and in which it mostly maintains itself. (*Being* 169/175-6, his
> emphasis)

No sign is more itself than the designation; significance has the character of not being itself, but

rather being diluted by the other syntactical signs which care for it and are cared for. Thus the de-

sign is the sign which is most authentically itself; it is not prostrate to and diluted by the non-

being of the world of meanings. In this sense, the disentanglement of designificance is the sign's

chiastic crossing from the entanglement of innerworldly (or intralinguistic) meaning to the

entanglement with innerworldly beings: "As factical being-in-the-world, Dasein, faling prey, has

already fallen away from itself; it has not fallen prey to some being which it does or does not run

into in the course of its being, but it has fallen prey to the *world* which itself belongs to its being"

(*Being* 169/176, his emphasis). The more the (de)sign is disentangled from the one, the more

entangled it is with the other. To explain the signification is to explicate the word's entanglement,

its kind of non-being in being-with and having fallen prey to the world of language (that the word means *instead of* its context); to explain the designation requires reconstructing its having fallen away from itself, reversing the decadence of falling prey, finding the sign's true being in the design: this re-reading or recollecting outside the text is what we call designed disentanglement. While the *language in pain* is a designated language, its designation being another language with which it is as much entangled as it is disentangled from itself (from its "own" language), true undead language is thoroughly *designed* on the fluctuations of the of the prime designifiers—nomination, necessitation, equation—in chiastic re-entanglement.

In the foregoing analyses there has been an implicit assertion or thesis in the organizing of the study of being and language: that language has a being not unlike our own being, that the results of a Heideggerian analysis of being through Dasein applies as well to an analysis of the being of language, that, in short, because our own being is so compounded with, by, and for language that thus its own being is *daseinlich* as well. Programmatically, we can therefore set the (un)dead into relation with the two major modes of meaning, the signifier/signified and authenticity/inauthenticity, by bringing it into conversation with Heidegger's existential analytic of the individual structural moments of care, the (fundamental) existentials of Dasein or the temporality of disclosedness in general: Dasein "is constituted by attunement, understanding, falling prey, and discourse" (*Being* 259/269) and, operating cumulatively, "Every understanding has its mood. Every attunement understands. Attuned understanding has the characteristic of entanglement. Entangled, attuned understanding articulates itself with regard to its intelligibility in discourse" (*Being* 321/335).

A. THE ENTANGLEMENT OF THE SIGN, as somewhat noted, is a type of inauthentic dilution of its meaning into the they-self, the meaning of the statement. In this inauthenticity, the sign inauthenticates its significance by deference to the others from which it de-distances itself. Although loss of significance or designificance objectifies the sign, it never makes of it a pure object—hence why, though it does not matter what a name or calling out means, the words are still carefully chosen by their significance. Because the objectified here is always of language, the "word-thing" still *is* insofar as it means, however little it does. However, from the rest of the sentence, paragraph, text, speech, and language, such a word as a name, a password, a code, a cipher, an identity, is profoundly *disentangled*: instead of deference and care for others, the objectified of language cares rather for itself, for its own meaning, to the limit of disentanglement. This disentanglement is the product of a differential and an affect of multiculturalism, of a political plurality of language. Moments of political disentanglement between languages result from appropriations like ἀλήθεια or φύσις. Being midway between significance and designificance, being perfect or stopped in the possibility of meaning but still deferential to context, being mediated by translation or interpretation but also actionable or metaphorical in texts, words disentangled from dead languages and resolved in living ones are not yet inherently designificant, but the possibilities of their significance are instead limited to the vulnerabilities of designification: nomination, necessitation, identification or equivalence. As the entanglement of meaning can transcend languages, since the collective of signs giving and taking from each other is demarcated only by designificance, only by untranslatability, this dead significance, however, still haunts any resolute designificance of those made vulnerable: hence why namers accept or stitch histories, hints, and hidden meanings into their names; why all

progammatical languages, codes, logics, and mathematical functions designate their immediate

necessities (x=2+2=4) but always exceed these and signify something just a little bit more ('if

Xavier has two apples and two oranges, he therefore has four fruits') or, for example, how a

function designates its graph which then models the meaning of the initiating problem; and why

one's name can become synonymous with one's person, or the name of a concept confused with

the concept itself. Disentanglement from meaning and subsequent re-entanglement with being is

thus a fundamental component of identity. This re-entanglement of the word to its ownmost

meaning bears a relationship to the ecstatic temporality of the Moment: "'In the Moment'

nothing can happen, but as an authentic present it lets us *encounter for the first time* what can be

'in a time' as something at hand or objectively present" (*Being* 323/338). The meaning of the

authentic design of the Moment is singular to its invocation as an invasion of world and time, an

identifying mark, into the otherwise mannered and ahistorical or fictive ease of gathered words,

where the inauthentic sign makes present its meaning out of any or all other presences. This

pullulating of presences is the precondition for metaphoricity: one must have many meanings

swelling up before significance allows such a deeply entangled replacement as one signified for

another, as one they-self for another. Metaphor is the supreme other in this loss of the my-self in

the they-self: "Entangled being-in-the-world is not only tempting and tranquillizing; it is at the

same time *alienating*" (*Being* 171/178, his emphasis). The metaphoric entanglement of the sign

is a type of alienating self- or sign-pleasure:

> However, this alienation cannot mean that Dasein is factically torn away from
> itself. On the contrary, it drives Dasein into a kind of being intent upon the most
> exaggerated 'self-dissection' which tries out all kinds of possibilities of
> interpretation, with the result that the 'characterologies' and 'typologies' which it
> points out are themselves too numerous to grasp. (*Being* 171/178)

The metaphor is a plurality of presences in one made present: "temptation, tranquillizing, alienation, and self-entanglement […] characterize the specific kind of being of falling prey. We call this kind of 'movement' of Dasein in its own being the *plunge* […]. Dasein plunges out of itself into itself" (*Being* 171/178). This plurality is possible and welcome in the inauthentic world of significance, but deeply troubling for designificance: the design cannot tolerate plural designifieds without corrupting itself. The sole purpose of the disentanglement of the designifier is to prevent the capsizing cascade of significance, for when one Tyler meets another, the my-self of the design gets intermittently replaced or invaded by a unknown they-self: "this distantiality which belongs to being-with is such that, as everyday being-with-one-another, Dasein stands in *subservience* to others. It itself *is* not; the others have taken its being away from it" (*Being* 122/126). Dasein stands out as the compression of a metonymic sequence, as the complex of its associations with others. In the radical cleft self of the metaphoric design the imaginary wholeness between designifier and designified breaks. The one case where the radical cleft self of metaphoric design maintains a provisional wholeness is in the function of the so-called "class of grammatical units which Jespersen labeled shifters" (Jakobsen 131): in deixis, the designation of an instant, or what we could call the variable design, employs institutionally designified terms in order to effect an "existential relation with the object it represents" (Jakobson 132) from the position of the my-self. Because "the general meaning of a shifter cannot be defined without a reference to the message" (Jakobson 131), because the designifier means *instead of* its context, the deictic or variable design functions with the same quantity and interference of φύσις *in designating* as living signifiers possess *in significance*: because deixis is designificance with the

φύσις customary to significance, it manifests language death-in-life. Consequently, algebra, conceived as a language of variable designs, is the only undead *language in pain*—the only designated, de-signed language, squirming across the metonymic gap between nothing and itself, forever an indexical translation of itself, out of nothing into itself in iteration.

B. THE ATTUNEMENT OF THE SIGN is the revelation of its belonging to the speaker and of its history in the discourse. The mood of the invocation, which always attunes an understanding or meaning, shows both the ownership or relationship of the speaker, the my-self of the sign, and the specific conditions which brought the sign into utterance, which allowed it to mean what it does. Dasein's historicity, or having-beenness, not so much its remembering, but its gathering of past being as a part of further being, is a precondition for all moods: "Mood represents the way in which I am always primarily the being [Seiende] that has been thrown" (*Being* 325/340). As the ecstatic temporality of having-been, attunement necessarily brings Dasein back to its thrownness, not its birth or genesis, but the immediate continuity in which it has been: "Mood discloses by turning away from and toward one's own Dasein. Whether authentically revealing or inauthentically concealing, *bringing* Dasein *before* the That of its own thrownness is existentially possible only if the being of Dasein, by its very meaning, *is* as constantly having been" (*Being* 325/340). "For language thrownness is essential" (Being 156/162, footnote), and thus, one can distinguish many moods for signs: slang, formal, ironic, archaic, etc., each showing the circumstances of the sign's presence and its action in the place it finds itself. Of these, we posit one authentic mood against all the others: the mood of language death, which as an anxiety over the possibility of non-meaning "brings Dasein before its ownmost thrownness and reveals the uncanniness of everyday, familiar being-in-the-world" (327/342). In anxiety, innerworldly

beings "must be encountered in just such a way that they are of no relevance whatsoever, but can show themselves in a barren mercilessness" (327/343). The sign in the mood of language death encounters other beings as essentially meaningless to its understanding, its mood returning it to its primal thrownness as signifier and dominating by disregard any context. In thus forming the design, the mood of language death "blunt forces" the cleft of the designifier and designified in each invocation. The having-been of the design is therefore continuously made anew in the instantaneous Moment. The mood of language death appropriates the disruption of this disentanglement and is therefore a type of literal sedition, leading the nationalism of the language away, apart, astray into disassociation and the privative grasp of the speech: this is thus a fraught relationship between and among language, speaker, and meaning: "Anxiety is anxious about naked [Design] thrown into uncanniness" (328/343). There is a greater magnitude of risk in the finite verb from its stronger significant appeal, the asseverative martyr by whose mood a sentence is made mortal, born, and dies, that simultaneously calls into being a thought to call an end to its thinking, more so than in the noun, whose significance can usually be traced or rounded down to the nearest designificance, just as there is more risk in the generalization than in the specification. The mood of language death is thus a method of risk management. While the risk of nouns can be managed through designification, the too great risk of the finite verb requires grammatical metaphor in order to tightly control the surplus of significance in its continuum over designificance: that which hovers lowest is the noun. Of these, the weakest nouns are those who read their meanings off their morphology, the youngest, most vulnerable to designation. His ur-classicism in general emphasizing the lineage and primordiality of truth, independent of analytical deductive pedigraic certainty, rather Heidegger founds philosophical

truth's contiguity or historicity in the looser connective tissue of etymological meaning and grammar. This etymological stain as a mood of language is just that yearning for the sign to offer up its ownmost potential, its authentic my-self (the self that both its morphological history and I demand of it), to disentangle it from the commonplace, commonsense, democratic idle talk, by conforming to something other than its ownmost being, than the blunt force of the cleft design, by conforming instead to morphological visibility, to etymological radiance and revelation. This mood can be seen as a perversion of the mood of language death. Authentic design means in non-meaning by being alone.

      C. THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SIGN, which is always an entangled attuned understanding, is always contextually, syntactically invoked meaning. Heidegger defines the ecstatic temporality of understanding thus: "In anticipation, Dasein *brings* itself *forth again* … to its ownmost potentiality-of-being. We call authentic having-*been repetition*" (*Being* 324/339, his emphasis). Here, authenticity is the resolute continuation meaning, which Heidegger connects with understanding prior to our interference or argument by analogy: "Meaning, structured by fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception, is the upon which of the project in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something" (*Being* 147/151, emphasis redacted). Words in labour operate together with both syntactical anticipation—the harmony of parts of speech to come, that for example a conjunction predicts another verb, a preposition another noun—and significant repetition, where the significance of a sign never changes so much from each use that it cannot be rounded up or down a step, because it will mean the same again. The meaning of a sign is projective or futural because it is expected that it will mean the same thing again: the invocation of a sign is made with the promise of a second coming. It has a relationship to the

past, but instead of its having-been determining it, a word's meaning is understood by its

continuing to mean the same as it has in the context its entanglement has stolen from it and the

thrownness its mood reads out: "Expecting is a mode of the future founded in awaiting that

temporalizes itself authentically as anticipation" (*Being* 322/337) and while understanding is

primarily futural and attunement is the proper existential for the past, forgetting is "a 'positive,'

ecstatic mode of having-been…. And only on the basis of this forgetting can the making present

that takes care of and awaits *retain* beings unlike Dasein encountered in the surrounding

world" (*Being* 324/339). The inauthentic sign forgets in its entangled attunement, and so

exchanges meaning and busies itself with taking care of the significance of innerworldly beings:

"Inauthentic understanding projects itself upon what can be taken care of" (*Being* 322/337). This

inauthenticity or significance in the forgetfulness of the sign is that which makes way for the

resolute repetition of the design: "Just as expectation is possible only on the basis of awaiting,

remembering is possible only on the basis of forgetting, *and not the other way around*" (*Being*

324/339). The design is always the same, resolutely, because of the significance it consumed and

remembers in specification: "The authentic coming-toward-itself of anticipatory resoluteness is

at the same time a coming back to the ownmost self thrown into its individuation" (*Being*

324/339). The mood of language death attunes the meaning as anxious about its repetition, as

managing the risk of transference by φύσις. Designification is the castration of φύσις: what

characterizes the undead is the specious lack of φύσις in its understanding. Its futurity is pure

repetition. When Karsten Harries aptly asserts, "Interpretation remains authentic only as long as

it preserves the tension between an inevitably public language and what that language leaves

unsaid" (500), what remains silent and preserves the authenticity is the privative designificance

consuming the consensus signification: authentic design means instead of its context.

D. THE DISCOURSE OF THE SIGN is language's governance over or predominance of the

speaking being, where the anxiety of meaning-toward-death and the being of language as care

for the death of meaning form, over the speaking being, a presence, which although constituting

Dasein's own being as discourse, possesses of itself a separate yet equal kinship with Dasein,

describable as *Daseinlichkeit*. While "Dasein is constituted by disclosedness, that is, by attuned

understanding" (*Being* 249/260) and "Dasein-with is essentially already manifest in attunement-

with and understanding-with. Being-with is 'explicitly' *shared* in discourse" (*Being* 157/162),

discourse presents itself to Dasein, imitates the being that I myself am, and stores in my clones

the excesses of information it could not arrogate into the empty, fluttering sleeves of

significance. The encroachment of design on Dasein makes of my being, let alone my language,

an *existence in pain*, a type of discursive undeath where mathematics can be

'discovered,' (imagine 'discovering' Esperanto therein) where ideas exist universally, eternally,

where the metonymic gap is cybernetic, for which the index is the power of the beholder:

"Dasein is the constant urgency of defeat and of the renewed resurgence of the act of violence

against Being, in such a way that the almighty sway of Being violates Dasein (in the literal

sense), makes Dasein into the site of its appearing, envelops and pervades Dasein in its sway, and

thereby holds it within Being" (*Introduction* 198/136). The initial vulnerabilities of design in

meaning become its strengths in being. The development of scientific discourse and its

subjugation of Dasein by sheer information can be defined by the differential between these two

formulas: "*anthrōpos = zōon logon echon* [the human = living having language], the human

being is the living thing equipped with reason. We grasp the inception in a freely constructed

formula that also summarizes our interpretation up to now: *phusis = logos anthrōpon echon*

[nature, emergence, swelling, growth = language having the human]: Being, the overwhelming

appearing, necessitates the gathering that pervades and grounds Being-human" (*Introduction*

195/134, my interpolations). The overwhelming corralling of φύσις in the second formula

prefigures Heidegger's later (elliptical) assertion: "Language speaks" (*Poetry, Language,*

Thought 197). I call this clause elliptical because in the grammatical absolute the verb hides its

true object: oneself, den Menschen, you, where the formula λόγος (ἄνθρωπον) ἔχων = gathering

holds (the human) = die Sprache spricht (den Menschen) = Language speaks you. This final

formula, serving as an update to Heidegger's, similarly summarizes *our* interpretation up to now

that language shows being toward death, and in this self-anxiety, its militant Ἀλήθεια imperils the

being of accompanying languages. *Legomenal* Dasein is inherently competitive; in its

marshalling of human speakers for its own propagation, it assaults and seeks to conquer or

colonize any language it meets, syncretism being its guerrilla mainstay. Thus, for instance,

legomenal Dasein eerily matches the more fascistic lines from *Being and Time*:

> In taking care of the things which [language] has taken hold of, for, and against
> others, there is constant care as to the way [it] differs from them, whether this
> difference is to be equalized, whether [its] own Dasein has lagged behind others
> and wants to catch up in relation to them, whether [its] Dasein in its priority over
> others is intent on suppressing them. [Meaning]-with-one-another is, unknown to
> itself, disquieted by the care about this distance. (122/126, adjusted to show
> similarity).

This last concept (or in Heideggerian terms 'existential'), meaning-with-the-other (in the sense

of different languages together), and the anxiety it produces, the distance or language gap,

motivates all regional linguistic conflicts and hegemonies of meaning, from language laws, to the

racist jingoism of assimilationists (as in "We speak English here, send 'em back"), to

paternalistic preservationism ("It's called a spanner not a monkey wrench", "Impact is not a verb,

fun not an adjective"), and so on. As there is something offensive or fearful in the hearing of a

language foreign to the hearer, the soft scream of significance under the preponderance of de-

signification, in hearing the signifying structure's absence in its presence, the language gap is

thus uncanny. This anxiety, built into the sensorium of meaning, is the immune system of

language, which responds either allergically as with the rage of language subjugation and

purification, hygienically with subtle lexicography and the seduction of the standard written

word, or with miscegenation. Notwithstanding that these are excessive cases in the meeting of

languages, this excessive response or conservatism is inherent to the evolutionary structure of

language, which, constantly abridged by the mimetic system of analogy, cannot communicate

without incorporation nor renovate without conservation: "In spite of the enormous number of

analogical changes over the course of several centuries, there is a very high survival rate for the

linguistic elements involved: they are merely distributed differently. …[A]nalogy, precisely

because it always utilises old material for its innovations, is eminently conservative" (Saussure

170/235-6). The analogical system here explained in an example is that which conformed the

ablaut of »strive, strove, striven«, a Norman word acquired after the violence of 1066AD, to that

of »drive, drove, drive« and »write, wrote, written« among other native Anglo-Saxon verbs:

"The strong conjugation (on the analogy of *drive* etc.) is found somewhat earlier than the weak

conjugation which would be normal for a verb adopted [from] French" (OED).

　　Although languages show concern for their end, a meaning-toward-death of mimetic

conservatism, yet unlike human dasein, the separation of language dasein, its transition into

archaism and its balkanization into national and regional dialects, is mutative not genitive,

creating through *φύσις* and the publicness of idle talk an unindividuated identity (neither

indivisible in the sense of sacred wholeness nor strictly separable in the significant manner of

liberal human dasein, whose birth-pangs create and remember a concern for selfhood and

newborn, and place a strain on the uniqueness of each *living having language*, each *ζῷον λόγον*

ἔχον, for the reason that the laughing, talking cow could not be milked). That is, of any particular

synchronic slice of language, or 'soil sample' so to speak, one would be unable to tell the

individuating line keeping it from generations before and after. (In fact, in empirical crises of

integrity such as this, the collapsing limit is either human Dasein itself or the political, national,

social boundaries of its drawing or gathering: tasked with tallying the exact number of languages

in the world, one counts either the inclusively syndicated or the exclusively individuated

speakers, and so decides there are, for example, as many as there are national, formally or

institutional recognized languages in a casual, vulgar sense; or as many as there are mutually

unintelligible dialects in the linguist's theory of the dialect continuum, which, as a sort of

spectral variance as much linguistic as geographical, shows mutual intelligibility between

proximates but would divide languages out from the differences of farther regions; or lastly, one

decides there are as many as there are idiolects in the extreme case of those unable to draw lines

in sand.) Thus, the only individuating principle is that offered by individuals, by the others

Dasein as being-with is constantly measuring, the most freely available ends being Dasein's

ownmost potential and its boundaries with others. The enumeration of languages

notwithstanding, each ultimately stands as its own world, as a constituent of design's self-

intelligibility to its own being in the world, but also as a world to each of the signs whose

significance it coordinates, demands, and restricts, however many beings speak it or whomever it

constitutes. While "Scientific language evolved in the context of, and as an aspect of, the

evolution of nation states" (Halliday 122), its genesis accelerated with the information

revolution, and contemporary trends in language, especially its ever expanding designificance,

are language's authentic response to information overload, to the preponderance of non-meaning,

where the resolution of Dasein in spite of its alienation is design's specificity.

VI. AN EXAMPLE IN CONCLUSION

Having developed these concepts, one can apply them to the case of Ancient Greek, and

contend: that the *φύσις* of Ancient Greek has ceased changing, directing, defending, multiplying,

dividing the language of fifth century Athens and that it no longer threatens neighbouring

languages; that although its words can still be interpreted, that is, that their *ἀλήθειαι* can still be

discovered, they have no command outside of the experimental setting in which one tests them;

that no *λόγος* gathers them, maintaining them together through conflict, and consequently that

any attempt at preserving their original syntax and inflections in contemporary discourse (for

example, in declining loan nouns in approximate cases for modern English sentences, or the

insistence on using classical plurals for cactus, formula, etc.) seems intentionally artificial and

uncomfortable, a discomfort manifest in delayed meaning; that instead the language is dead and

should be no more, were it not for its retention in writing, its many graven stores, so that the

language is but a memory, technologically extended and made real; that therefore any presence

in modern languages is either as the haunting of ancestral etymologies recognized from the many

printed books, or as the reverence of the true undead returned through a scientific necromancy;

that these ghosts are the recollection of the dead metaphoric, that they stand out in incongruence

from the erasure of adjacent series; that they can, in a McLuhanesque sense, be either hot by

meaning through their metonymic underwritings or cold by concealing these altogether; and that

consequently they assume the dignity of a person in the image of them who remade it,

resembling their whims, *daseinlich*.

3. BRIEF CONSOLATION OF THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS FOR WHAT WAS LOST IN THIS

ABRIDGEMENT

One only ever knows language *is there* when it threatens, fails, or mistakes; its presence only ever thematizes itself in a problem. *Legomenal* Dasein is there to be destroyed, conquered, or covered over insofar as it is there to destroy, conquer, and cover over. The mood of language death presents itself as a solution to language presence, as an end to translation warfare disguised in the peace of transference, but it can be repurposed for an opposite effect. The three major functions of this mood (that is, name, necessity, and sum) can be appropriated not for the seamless transference or transmission of designified, seeded terms, but for their ek-sistence and obloquy, for self-sabotage in self-showing. This is to say, that the mood of language death may be perverted, so that the mathematics of a designated, designified de-significant system may become the mathemes of a designated, designified significant system, one begotten by Jacques Lacan, from a rejoining of the immediate and ahistorical symbols of algebra to their history in our learning, to their presence in our language—from, in short, a dialectic of mathematics and ethnomathematics. By reforming the mathematical symbol with its possibility of meaning and representing it with its pasts, the matheme breaks down the forms it takes; it mistakes and misnames itself, fails to compel by completing a succession of failures, and incorporates instead of equating. In short, it is the mood of language death fallen short of death, a *mathematics in pain*. As an ostentatious self-threatening, the matheme earns the ire it receives from the irony it susurrates over the mathematicians. This dialectical space between the full seizure of name, necessity, and sum, and the semblance of full nomination, impossibility, and equation, the matheme, in its solitude, created; it was the first designified metaphor. However, it grew out of

the freedom and frivolity of the 20th century hermeneutical comportment towards the recycling

of language death. The matheme is the merely ironized, instead of the imposingly weaponized,

bones of an excessively mathematical culture deescalated from its dominance by this synthesis.

Thus, with Heidegger's $\dot{\alpha}\lambda\acute{\eta}\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ comes then Lacan's $\sqrt{-1}$, Deleuze's n+1, and Badiou's

'mathematics is/as ontology,' but even before this Descartes' '*je pense, donc je suis*' had to be

translated into *cogito ergo sum* and then collapsed into the *cogito* along with Freud's *das Ich*.

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