

This Is Not Sufficient: The Question of Animals in Derrida

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Is it possible to define Derrida's thought in a simple sentence? Perhaps one could say this: Derrida has always been a thinker of today. Already in 1968, before the so-called end of the so-called Cold War, Derrida had called our attention to what was happening on that today. At the beginning of "The Ends of Man," Derrida diagnoses the increasing number of international philosophy colloquia (such as the one in which he is participating, such as the one in which we are participating), starting in the second half of the twentieth century; he diagnoses this event as an attempt by the West to master those places where the discussion of philosophical issues makes no sense.¹ It is also in these opening pages of "The Ends of Man" that Derrida speaks of democracy as the only form in which such colloquia can take place because only democracy can contain a diversity of languages and nations. Yet Derrida argues that the form of democracy, a form in which he is granted permission to protest against the Vietnam War, is not adequate to the "idea" of democracy (MP, 134–5/114). It is as if in 1968 Derrida had already found the thought of "democracy to come." Nearly forty years later in *Rogues*, Derrida will link the thought of democracy to come with "the age of so-called *mondialisation*," with "globalization," as is said in the Anglophone world.² Late in the second essay of *Rogues*, "The 'World' of the Enlightenment to Come," Derrida tells us that "mondialisation" makes war, especially world war, lose its pertinence (V, 212/154). But war losing its pertinence does not imply peace (V, 174/124). Derrida says, "A new violence is being prepared and in truth has been unleashed for some time now, in a way that is more visibly suicidal ... than ever" (V, 214/156). Derrida's reflections on suicide (or the autoimmune, as he adds here) refer us to the question of life.³ In *Rogues* again, he says, "the old word 'vie' [life] perhaps remains the enigma of the political around which we turn" (V, 22/4). It is necessary therefore to think "life otherwise, life and the force of life" (V, 57/33).

But we must think about animals. One of the results of globalization is the expansion of human rights to the level of universality. This universality, Derrida states, is rational (V, 212/154). But it is just as rational, at the moment of the universal expansion of human rights, "to continue to interrogate ... all the limits we thought pertained to life ... between the living and the dead ... but also between that living being called 'human' and the one called 'animal'" (V, 209/151). In his dialogue

with Elizabeth Roudinesco, Derrida is even more emphatic about the decisive nature of the question of animality; he says,

[the question of animality] represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as the concepts that attempt to delimit what is proper to man, 'the essence and the future of humanity, ethics, politics, law, 'human rights,' 'crimes against humanity,' 'genocide,' etc.⁴

Here, I will attempt precisely that—to think with Derrida about the limit between the living being called man and the one called animal. This would be a thought once more of "the ends of man," once more a question of who we are. This thinking will lead, I hope, to a different concept of "life and the force of life." Force will always be at the center of the question of life. If from Aristotle life has been thought as pure actuality or presence, as the full and proper possession of all one's powers and possibilities, as the Prime Mover, auto-affection in the form of thought thinking itself, then life thought otherwise than being-present will consist in a weak force. This weak force, as we shall see, is in fact a kind of super-sovereignty, in the sense of more than sovereignty, like super-life (*sur-vival*). This weak force would be a vulnerability that makes life unconditionally open to what comes. Since it is weak, this super-sovereignty refers to powerlessness (*impuissance*), to a lack, defect, or fault (*défaut* or *faute*). The thought of this fault is at the center of Derrida's writings on animals; perhaps we have to say that it is at the center of his writings overall. It will therefore be our central concern in this essay. What is at stake is to think the fault (which does not result from a fall of any sort), to think this fault in a way that is non-privative. In Derrida, this non-privative fault has many names; we shall consider several, starting with the *pharmakon*. The *pharmakon* is evil and yet there is something good about it. Always in Derrida we are concerned with a logic of the limit—say, between evil and good—which is not oppositional, a logic in which the two poles are not external to one another. Always in Derrida there is a search for the third genus, the third *genos*, the *Geschlecht* or *khōra*. The thought of the *khōra* in Derrida always implies a kind of thickening or multiplying of the limit, turning it into limits (in the plural). But this new thought of the limit does not mean that we are going to reduce human beings to animals or elevate animals to human existence. We are not going to try to give language back to the animals. Instead, with Derrida, we are going to try to show that human existence is also deprived of the phenomenological "as such" that defines essence and identity; we also suffer from this defect. On the other hand, we are going to try to understand the lack of speech, this

silence, as something positive, even as something rational. What we are going to do, following Derrida, is problematize what he calls "a worldwide anthropology [*une anthropologie mondiale*]" which is "a way for man today to posit himself over and against what he calls 'the animal' in what he calls 'the world.'"⁵

The motifs of man, animal, and especially world must be problematized because it is precisely this "absence" in the animals, this inability to speak and ask questions, this lack of access to the "as such," to the "as such" especially of death that allows us, as human existence (*Dasein*), to kill them, to treat them as scapegoats, to sacrifice them, to wage war on the animals on a global scale. In his writings on animals, Derrida shows that no response to this "war of the species" is "sufficient." We come then to the most distant purpose of this essay: it consists in the attempt to find a more sufficient response to this violence.⁶ As Derrida says in his dialogue with Roudinesco, "The relation between humans and animals *must* change" (DQD, 108/64); a revolt is necessary (see DQD, 112/67). As we can see already, such a revolt, which is really a decision, would be based on the generalization and the positivity of the fault. The decision, I am going to claim, amounts to a reversal of unconditional non-hospitality into unconditional hospitality. But as you can see already, this kind of revolt against war, being based on powerlessness, being based on a mixing of opposites, has risks. Let us begin with Derrida's diagnosis of our "today" as "a strange 'war' without war."⁷

The Diagnosis: Globalization as War Without War

For Derrida, a "today" is never simple because of the fact that repetition fundamentally determines all experience (ATIA, 44/393). Derrida's thought always revolves around a kind of duplicity between a transcendental structure, which is relatively unchanging, and the appearance of that structure as an event.⁸ Therefore, he can say that on the one hand what is happening today "is as old as man, as old as what he calls his world, his knowledge, his history and his technology" (ATIA, 45/393). Yet on the other hand he can claim that the event is very "new," "unprecedented" (ATIA, 44/393). Insofar as it is new and unprecedented, our today seems to be "post-Kantian modernity" (V, 118/80), the last two hundred years. In his diagnosis of this very old and very new "today" that is ours, Derrida brings to light what he calls "indices," pointers, signs. Here is the first one, which concerns our relation to animals. In "The Animal that Therefore I am," Derrida points out that our relation to animals is being transformed at a pace that is nearly impossible to calculate, and this transformation is due to well known advances in technology and forms of knowledge (ATIA, 44/392). It is

undeniable—Derrida repeats this claim of undeniability frequently—that animals are currently being subjected to violence in the name of the well being of man. But taking this idea of violence farther, Derrida compares what is happening today to genocide and the Holocaust (see DQD, 122/73):

[The annihilation of certain species] is occurring through the organization and exploitation of an artificial, infernal, virtually interminable survival, in conditions that previous generations would have found monstrous, outside of every supposed norm of a life proper to animals that are thus exterminated by means of their continued existence or even their overpopulation.

We know well what Derrida is speaking of: certain species are “farmed,” making them more numerous and better fed, only in order to send them to “the same hell, that of the imposition of genetic experimentation or extermination by gas or fire” (ATIA, 46–7/394–5; see also DQD, 122/73).

As Derrida admits, these processes are all well known and it is easy to conjure up images of this violence. But then, and more importantly, Derrida turns to the pathos that these images of animal slaughter make arise in us. He says,

If these images are ‘pathetic,’ if they evoke sympathy, it is also because they ‘pathetically’ open the immense question of pathos and the pathological, precisely, that is, of suffering, pity, and compassion; and the place that has to be accorded to the interpretation of this compassion, to the sharing of this suffering among the living, to the law, ethics, and politics that must be brought to bear upon this experience of compassion. For what has been happening now for two centuries involves a new experience of this compassion (ATIA, 47/395).

As we know from his dialogue with Roudinesco, Derrida is sympathetic to those who speak of animal rights, even though he criticizes the concept of right (*droit*) (DQD, 109/64, 112/67). But in “The Animal that Therefore I am” he stresses that “these voices are raised” in order to awaken us to precisely this fundamental compassion. Indeed, no one can deny the suffering, fear, or panic, the terror or fright, as Derrida says, that humans witness in certain animals. The question of animals suffering leaves no doubt. Derrida concludes this discussion by saying,

The two centuries I have been referring to somewhat approximately in order to situate the present in terms of this tradition

have been those of an unequal struggle, a war being waged, the unequal forces of which could one day be reversed, between those who violate not only animal life but even and also this sentiment of compassion and, on the other hand, those who appeal to an irrefutable testimony and pity. War is being waged over the subject of pity (ATIA, 50/397).

We can now see Derrida’s diagnosis of our “today,” his “hypothesis”⁹: the war between humans and animals is “passing through a critical phase” (ATIA, 50/397).

Complicating his dating of our “today”—and this is not the final complication we will see here—Derrida claims (on the basis of *Rogues*, to which we shall turn in a moment, but this claim is quite explicit in *The “Concept” of September 11*¹⁰) that this critical phase really occurs after the end of the Cold War (V, 146/103). The end of the Cold War not only sees the acceleration of the compassionless technological treatment of animals, it also saw the rise of secularism. Yet this secularization is “ambiguous”; even while it “frees itself from the religious ... it remains marked, in its very concept, by the religious” (V, 51/28). Therefore, at the end of the Cold War the religious returns. Let us take up Derrida’s 1994 essay “Faith and Knowledge,” which will provide more determination for the violence of today. It will also open up the question of “globalization.”¹¹ In “Faith and Knowledge,” Derrida also speaks of “signs” of “today” (FS, 48/35, 53/38–9). For Derrida, two things have to be explained in relation to the return of religion today (FS, 57–8/42–3). First, the return of the religious today is not a simple return; its globality and its figures (tele-techno-media-scientific, capitalistic and politico-economic) remain original and unprecedented. But Derrida goes on: it is also not a simple return of the religious. The return involves a “radical destruction” of the religious, first due to the war against the Roman and state or organized church waged by fundamentalism, and second due to a pacifist movement of universal fraternization, the reconciliation of “men, son of the same God,” these brothers all belonging to the monotheistic tradition of Abrahamic religions. Yet the movement of peace, according to Derrida, contains a double horizon. On the one hand, it involves the kenotic (or the emptying) horizon of the death of God and thus an anthropological re-immanentization. Here Derrida alludes to what Pope John Paul II said about the supreme value of human life. The late Pope’s encyclicals seem to imply, Derrida suggests, that after the death of the Christ, the first death of God, there will be a second death of God; the movement of peace would result in there being only man. On the other hand, the pacifying movement involves a second horizon; the declaration of peace can also be a pacifying gesture. Referring to Rome,

Derrida speaks of a kind of religious colonization, the imposition "surreptitiously [of] a discourse, a culture, a politics, and a right, to impose them on all the other monotheistic religions, including the non-Catholic Christian religions" (FS, 57–8/43). Beyond Europe, the aim would be to impose, in the name of peace, "a globalatinazation [*mondialatinasation*]" (FS, 58/43). For Derrida, who like Foucault reverses Clauswitz's famous saying ("War is politics by other means"), the movement of peace is war "by other means": "the field of this war or this pacification is without limit" (FS, 58/43).

The second point that must be explained provides more determination to the violence of this war. What needs to be explained is the autoimmune nature of the current return of the religious, secreting its own poison and its own antidote, its own *pharmakon*, we could say. The same movement that renders in-dissociable religion and tele-techno-scientific reason in its most critical aspect reacts inevitably to itself. As Derrida says, "It is the terrifying but fatal logic of the auto-immunity of the unscathed that will always associate science and religion" (FS, 59/44). Just as the processes of animal extermination are well known, how this autoimmunity works is well known. Quite simply, because global terrorism is indeed global, it would be impossible without the very technology (the cell phones, the emails, the jets of 9/11) that it is reacting against in the name of the unscathed nature of the religious (see CS11, 154/101). But Derrida also points out that the use of this technology, this hyper-technology, is linked to what he calls "new archaic violence." The second non-hyper-technological violence resorts to "pre-machinal living being," "to bare hands," prehensile organs. It is probably not necessary to remind you of the cases of beheadings in Iraq. In any case, Derrida summarizes the violence of the return of the religious in this way:

This archaic and ostensibly more savage radicalization of 'religious' violence claims, in the name of 'religion,' to allow the living community to rediscover its roots, its place, its body and its idiom intact (unscathed, safe, pure, proper). It spreads death and unleashes self-destruction in a desperate (auto-immune) gesture that attacks the blood of its own body: as though thereby to eradicate uprootedness and re-appropriate the sacredness of life safe and sound. Double root, double uprootedness, double eradication (FS, 71/53).

It may seem as though with the return of the religious today we have left behind the question of the animal. But we have never left behind the question of the living. Moreover, there is an explicit link between these two signs or indices: the Abrahamic religions are unified by the sacrifice

of a ram, a substitute for the sacrifice of a man (FS, 57/43). As Derrida says in his dialogue with Jean-Luc Nancy,

The 'Thou shalt not kill'—with all its consequences, which are limitless—has never been understood within the Judeo-Christian tradition ... as a 'Thou shalt not put to death the living in general.' This has become meaningful in religious cultures for which carnivorous sacrifice is essential, as being-flesh.¹²

In any case, we can start to see that in which Derrida's diagnosis consists: after the end of the Cold War, the religious accompanies globalization like a "shadow" (FS, 59/44), but globalization is war "by other means"; but, even more, the violence of this war, which is violence against the living in general, is autoimmune precisely because it is global and therefore limitless.

Derrida presents his diagnosis of the post-Cold War "today" in *Rogues*. Here we encounter another complication of the dating of our "today." In *Rogues* Derrida tells us that over the last two hundred years the idea of democracy has come to be no longer restricted to intra-national constitutions; instead it is now international, that is, it determines the relations between nations. But it is important that Derrida, in *Rogues* (but *Rogues* is not the only place; we should look at *Politics of Friendship* and "Force of Law" too), analyzes texts that date from between the two world wars: Husserl's *The Crisis of European Science* (1935), Benjamin's *The Critique of Violence* (1921), and Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* (1932). It seems to me that Derrida focuses on this date, between the two world wars, because a world war is already a form of globalization; it announces globalization. Because a world war encompasses the whole world, and because, in order to encompass the whole world, it must rely on techno-science, the attack can come from anywhere and at a distance; in a world war, already, it is becoming increasingly difficult to identify the enemy (CS11, 154/101; CS11, 164/109). Nevertheless, as Derrida points out, the world wars were fought between sovereign nation-state unities or between coalitions of nation-state unities; then we could still, for the most part, identify the enemy.

Today, however, after the end of the Cold War, the fragility of the nation-state is being tested more and more, and the denials of its fragility, according to Derrida, are manifestations that the state is in its death throes. Agencies like the International Criminal Court and the demand for universal human rights encroach on nation-state sovereignty. But the result of this universalization or "worldwide-ization" is that the concepts of war, world war, enemy, and even terrorism, along with the distinction between civilian and military or between army, police, and

militia, all of these concepts and distinctions are losing their pertinence (V, 212/154, 150/106). As Derrida says here and in *The "Concept" of September 11*, what is called September 11 will not have created or revealed this situation, although it will have surely media-theatricalized it (V, 212/154-55; V, 147/103).

According to Derrida in *Rogues*, this is the context we have inherited from the end of the Cold War (V, 213/155, translation modified; see also CS11, 179/121). The context consists in "the so-called globalization [*mondialisation*]" being

more in-egalitarian and violent than ever, therefore, more alleged and less worldwide than ever.... [T]here is no *the world* [*il n'y a pas le monde*].... It is this so-called globalization [*mondialisation*] that then confiscates to an unprecedented degree and concentrates into a small part of the human world so many natural resources, capitalist riches, techno-scientific and tele-technological powers, reserving also for that small part of the world those two great forms of immunity that go by the names public health and military security. It is precisely in this context, then, at the end of the Cold War, that clashes of force in view of hegemony no longer oppose the sovereign state to an enemy that takes either an actual or virtual state form.

In this passage Derrida italicizes the definite article, "*il n'y a pas le monde*." In our so-called "mondialisation," the world seems more restricted—smaller—than ever. The world is no longer *the world* because the world no longer functions as "a backdrop" (*un fond*) for human endeavors, let us say quickly, for capitalism. With so-called globalization, it is as if *we are not in the world, but the world is in us*; or, more precisely, as Derrida says, the world is concentrated into a small "parcel," the Latin parcel, which is also English or even American: "the United States and its allies." The part encircles the whole like a sphere. This sphericity of the enclosure of the world explains Derrida's suspicion concerning the word "globalization" (CS11, 179–121).¹³ This enclosure means that "mondialisation is not taking place" (CS11, 181/123). Moreover, in the "clashes of force" that take place in this so-called globalization, there is no identifiable enemy in the form of a "state" territory with whom the encircling part ("the United States and its allies") would wage what could still be called a "war," even if we think of this as a war on international terrorism (see CS11, 144/94). The balance of terror of the Cold War that insured that no escalation of nuclear weapons would lead to a suicidal operation, as Derrida says, "all that is over" (V, 214/156, see CS11, 144/94). Instead,

a new violence is being prepared and in truth has been unleashed for some time now, in a way that is more visibly suicidal or auto-immune than ever. This violence no longer has to do with *world* war or even with *war*, even less with some right to wage war. This is hardly re-assuring—indeed, quite the contrary (V, 215/156; see CS11, 145/94).

What does it mean to be "more suicidal"? To be more suicidal is to kill more of oneself. But how can one kill more of oneself? The "more" means that, since there is only a fragile distinction between states, one's self includes more and more of the others (we could take up the problem of immigration here). But if one's self includes others that threaten (terrorist cells, for example [see CS11, 146/95]), if one wants to immune oneself then one must murder more and more of those others that are inside. Since the others are inside one's self, one is required to kill more and more of oneself. This context is very different from the rigid and external opposition, symbolized by the so-called "Iron Curtain," that defined the Cold War. There and then, "we" had an identifiable enemy, with a name, which allowed the number of the enemies to be limited. But here and now, today, the number of "enemies" is unlimited; all of us, we might say, are rogues. Every other is wholly other ("*tout autre est tout autre*"), and thus every single other needs to be rejected by the immune system. This innumerable rejection resembles a genocide or, what is worse, an absolute threat. During the Cold War the absolute threat of a nuclear war was contained by game theory (which refers to calculative reason). Derrida says, however, in the first essay of *Rogues*, "The Reason of the Strongest," that

[The absolute threat] can no longer be contained when it comes neither from an already constituted state nor even from a potential state that might be treated as a rogue state. Such a situation rendered futile or ineffective all the rhetorical resources (not to mention military resources) spent on justifying the word *war* and the thesis that the 'war against international terrorism' had to target particular states that give financial backing or logistical support or provide a safe haven for terrorism, state that, as it is said in the United States, 'sponsor' or 'harbor' terrorists. All these efforts to identify 'terrorist' states or rogue states are 'rationalizations' aimed not at denying so much some absolute anxiety but the panic or terror before the fact that the absolute threat no longer comes from or is under the control of some state or some identifiable state form (V, 149/105; see CS11, 150–1/98).

This comment should make us reflect on the current rhetoric in the United States about Iran and North Korea. In any case, what Derrida is saying here is that the worst is possible, here and now, more possible than ever. The worst threat is still to come (V, 148/104; see CS11, 149/97).

The worst has a structure. The worst, a superlative, is the most suicidal, the most autoimmune, since in the name of purity it threatens to contaminate everything. In the name of life it threatens to kill everything, "le tout." The structure of the worst is a question of numbers, and it calls for a rationality that is more than calculative. In "Faith and Knowledge" (FS, 85–6/65) Derrida writes,

But the more than One [*le plus d'un*] is without delay more than two. There is no alliance of two unless it is to signify in effect the pure madness of pure faith. The worst violence. The more than One is this $n + 1$ which introduces the order of faith or of trust in the address of the other, but also the mechanical, machine-like division (testimonial affirmation and reactivity, 'yes, yes,' etc, remote-control murder, ordered at a distance even when it rapes and kills with bare hands). The possibility of radical evil both destroys and institutes the religious.

This ambiguous phrase "le plus d'un" could be translated in English as "more of one" or "no more one" or "more than one." On the one hand, this phrase means that in auto-affection, even while it is "auto," the same, there is more than one; immediately with one, there is no more one ($n + 1$ becomes $n - 1$ ¹⁴), there is a division into two, a kind of fault line between the self and other, and others. On the other hand, the phrase means that there is a lot more of one, only one, the most one. The worst derives from this second sense of "plus d'un." In this crucial passage, Derrida is making a distinction between the worst (evil) and radical evil (see FL, 61/28). As for Kant, for Derrida radical evil is literally radical, evil at the root. It is entwined with humanity and is inextirpable by human powers; it is evil in the heart.¹⁵ For Derrida, radical evil consists in the inconceivable, small, "infinitesimal difference" (*une différence infime*¹⁶) between me and an other, even between me and an other in me. Derrida would describe this infinitesimal hiatus (*écart*) as the address, the "à" or the "to"; it is not only difference, across the distance of the address, it is also repetition. It is not only a repetition; this self-divergence is also violence, a rending of oneself, an incision. Nevertheless, radical evil is not absolute evil (CS11, 151/99). The worst violence occurs—is the worst really possible or is it the impossible itself?—when the other to which one is related is completely assimilated

to or completely in one's self, when an address reaches its proper destination, when it reaches only its proper destination. Reaching only its proper destination, the address will exclude more, many more, and that "many more," at the limit, amounts to all. It is this complete exclusion (or extermination) of the most—there is no limit to this violence (CS11, 151/99)—that makes this violence the worst violence. The worst is a relation that makes of more than one simply one, that makes out of a division an indivisible sovereignty. In its most paradoxical formula the worst violence would be a violence that produced something absolutely alive and absolutely dead.¹⁷ It would be dead because its actual life would exclude—kill—all the virtualities or potentialities. In this formula, we can see that the worst resembles the "pure actuality," the *energeia* of Aristotle's Prime Mover, the One God: the sphere, or better, the globe of thought thinking itself (V, 35/15). The religious always accompanies this process like a shadow. Or to put this paradoxical idea of the worst in another way: absolute life would be absolute spirit, and absolute spirit, being spiritual, would be dead, absolutely dead. Through the worst we have returned to the two "ends of man": life and death in spirit or of spirit.

The Risks: Biological Continuism and Metaphysics Separation

If this structure truly defines the worst, then what is required, here and now, in the age of globalization, is a lesser violence, "the least possible violence"¹⁸—as Derrida says as early as "Violence and Metaphysics," "violence against violence."¹⁹ The lesser violence would be a limited violence and therefore, as we anticipated, a new logic of the limit is required, a new logic of the limit that would keep the future open (CS11, 169/113). This logic of the limit will problematize what Derrida in *Aporias* calls "the anthropological limit."²⁰ In other words, it will problematize the absolute oppositional limit between the living being called man and the living being called animal. In "The Animal that Therefore I am," Derrida on the one hand speaks of "thickening" (*épaissir*) the limit, of "multiplying [*multiplier*]" and increasing" it, that is, he wants to try to make the limit more and more divisible. This multiplication of the limit provides one reason for Derrida's insistence on the plural "les animaux" (ATIA, 51/398). As we shall see, there is another and more important reason for this insistence on the plural. But on the other hand this multiplication does not mean that we are going to give to the animals the property of which man says that they are deprived. Instead, the property by means of which man separates himself from the animals (like a separate substance) has to be "ratcheted down" (*démultiplier*) (A, 219). In this new logic of the limit, the question is: what does a limit become once it

is abyssal, once the frontier no longer forms a single indivisible line but more than one internally divided line, once as a result it can no longer be traced, objectified, or counted as single and indivisible (ATIA, 53/399)? As we shall see, Derrida does not attack this exterior or absolute opposition limit frontally. But a direct attack can show us what risks are involved in an oblique attack, a weak response. A direct attack on the anthropological limit would amount to reducing the human down to the animal, down to the biological, down to irrational instincts and forces. In other words, in such a direct attack the limit between man and animals would become one of homogeneous continuity; we would have a biological continuism (ATIA, 52/398) or, even more simply, biologism. Having produced a result that is, as Derrida says, making a word play, "simply too asinine," "simplement trop bête" (ATIA, 52/398), one could then react in the opposite direction and make the limit between the human and the animal once again oppositional. For Derrida, when Heidegger in "The Self-Assertion of the German University" speaks of a spiritual world as the power that preserves a people's force ("Macht" and "Kräft" in Heidegger's German, "puissance" and "force" in the French translation), connected as that force is to the earth and blood,²¹ Heidegger exemplifies the complicity of these two risks, a biological continuism and an oppositional reaction. In *Of Spirit* Derrida asks, what is the price of Heidegger's strategy here? On the one hand, Derrida thinks that Heidegger's spiritualization of force implies that he does not demarcate himself from biologism. On the other, because he does not demarcate himself clearly from biologism, he opposes biologism only "by re-inscribing spirit in an oppositional determination, by once again making it a unilaterality of subjectivity, even if in its voluntarist form."²² Heidegger's strategy results in the worst; it capitalizes on both the risks or both the evils—by not demarcating itself off, it ends up sanctioning Nazism, or more generally racism, by spiritualizing it, and when it demarcates itself off, it ends up, through spirit, making a gesture that is still metaphysical.²³ In *Of Spirit* Derrida claims that it is urgent to find the least bad (less worse) form of complicity with the biologicistic and the metaphysical risks.²⁴ The new logic of the limit is supposed to be a response to this urgency of the least bad or the less worse.

With this new logic of the limit, Derrida is still speaking of the logic of autoimmunity. In the interview called "The 'Concept' of September 11" Derrida tells us that "the *pharmakon* is another name, an old name, for this auto-immunity logic" (CS11, 182/124). If we are to pursue this new logic it seems that we are required to return to Derrida's early essay, "Plato's Pharmacy." But we can see another reason for returning to this early essay. We have seen that the first two signs of our "today," the war of the species and the return of the religious, intersect through the

question of sacrifice. The logic of autoimmunity always operates towards expelling or rejecting that part of the self that threatens it; it always tries to send that part off somewhere else or kill it like a scapegoat, which in ancient Greek is "pharmakos." This term of course is part of the linguistic network of the "pharmakon." But we can find more motivations for returning to this early essay. In "Plato's Pharmacy," Derrida compares the *pharmakon* to democracy as Plato describes it in Book VIII of the *Republic*, and in this context he uses the term "voyou."²⁵ But we can find one more motivation, and perhaps this is the most important. If we are going to rethink the limit between man and animal then we are rethinking the limit between two genera, a re-thinking that requires a third genus, which would be the *khōra*. "Plato's Pharmacy" is the first time in which Derrida speaks of the *khōra*. Therefore, if, following Derrida,²⁶ we are to rethink the anthropological limit then we must rethink the problem of the animal all the way down into its "soil" (*sol*) and all the way down into the "base of the column" (*socle*) that keeps the institution of this limit erect (see ATIA, 50/397). That pursuit means, in the briefest term, a kind of return to the Greeks.

Conclusion: Reverse Unconditional Non-Hospitality

A return to the Greeks is necessary in order to determine the idea of a limit. Although we cannot do this here, Derrida's discussion of the *khōra* would allow us to isolate two terms that are crucial for a more sufficient response to the suffering of the living: anachronism and spacing (*espacement*). Without going into detail, we can say that both terms refer to a self-experience or a self-relation (auto-affection) that remains temporally and spatially "out of joint." On the one hand, anachronism shows that the self-relation is always related to alterity, that it is always heterogeneous, that the other is always coming, futural. On the other hand, spacing shows that frontier between me and others is never completely closed, that the border is porous, that the door is open. But we must expand the self-relation suggested by the *khōra*. The self-relation takes place between a tendency toward singularity and a tendency toward universality. Both singularity and universality imply animality. The silence of an animal indicates a secrecy that cannot be appropriated, while the animal's relentless repetition of the same growl indicates machinery. Here we come to an important and perhaps difficult transition. In order to reverse unconditional non-hospitality to unconditional hospitality we must reverse the tendency toward universalization. In other words, we must prioritize the tendency toward singularization. The tendency toward universalization opens the self-relation, since it conceives every single other as replaceable. Singularization, however,

makes us see every other, every other living being, every other animal as an event, as irreplaceable.²⁷ Making singularization prior does not mean that we eliminate the movement toward universality. Indeed, the solution to the worst that I am trying to conceive involves making what is passive active. We cannot not speak and therefore break silence, and we cannot not be silent and therefore stifle this voice. Make the passive active. Or, to put this idea another way, make the privative positive. If we make the passive active, we constitute a "weak force," a force that lets the silence be, a force that lets the voice resound. The source for this idea of a tendency towards singularization is Derrida's discussion of the date in "Schibboleth for Paul Celan."²⁸ A date, one date recalls the singularity of the other, even as it internalizes it as repeatable and relatively universal (we are not speaking here of an absolute singularity), even as it forgets the singularity of the other. Nevertheless, a date, one date, one life, is singular and calls for another date (eschatology)—even as it betrays the singularity of the date through its repeatability. A date welcomes the singular other. Even a cat has a singular name. But every single other must be welcomed in the way of the date. Every single other must be addressed as one, therefore as a friend and not as the enemy. In other words, up the ante on hospitality, engage in this mad rationality that demands that we give every other a name. Only through this excessiveness can we reduce the unlimited violence that comes with designating all the others, even the others in me, simply by means of the common noun "the enemy."

What you have just read is a general presentation of the solution, which concerns the idea of replacement based on dating. To close, let me provide a little more detail. I am trying to find a response or solution that is the least violent. With this idea of the least violence, with this idea of a more sufficient response, what I am trying to do is occupy a space between undecidability and prescription. I am trying to occupy a space between saying almost nothing (at times undecidability sounds to me when uttered by "Derrideans" like a *flatus voci*) and saying too much (laws for the treatment of animals, laws of vegetarianism, for example).²⁹ I do not know if this space in between exists. But what I have done is construct a kind of "recipe"—how can we eat *well*, that is, in the least evil way—for the more sufficient response. Indeed, the recipe departs from Derrida's well known logic of the double bind between iterability (or universalization) and the singularization of the event.³⁰ The recipe amounts to a kind of bet on human psychology as it is viewed by common opinion. The central idea lies in the naming of the animals, which metaphorically "eats" them. Naming each and every one of them (naming as we do a child who is coming³¹) will engage our passions, will make us feel differently, and our passions will make us think differently

and act differently; naming them, the hope is, will change the way we "literally" treat and eat the animals.³² Here is the "recipe" in seven steps.

1. Recognize that we are composed of one force, the force that does not have the ability or the force to keep the others out. The definition of a weak force is an ability to be unable, here, an ability to be unable to hold the others out. In other words, make the passive active. Let the others in their singularity in.

2. Then, up the ante on this weak force, make it unconditional, which amounts to letting every single other in. Once again, the more sufficient response is the friendly response: unconditional friendship. Unconditional friendship is unconditional forgiveness since all the others, all the animals, are defective. (We should not forget here that unconditionality follows from Kant's insight that a law, if it is to be worthy of its name, requires it to be absolutely universal.)

3. Name every single other in its singularity. The name always results in the iterability of the singular.³³ The iterability is the same weak force with which we began: letting them in reduces them to a medium of sameness. The medium of sameness means that I have the ability to be unable to remain silent. The naming places every single other in a medium that tends toward universality, in a medium that does violence to that singularity, that even "kills" them in their singularity. The name, so to speak, "eats" them.

4. Recognize, however, that the violence of the name must be done in a certain way. Recognize, in other words, that the animals must be eaten *well*, with the least amount of violence. How?

5. Carry the name, not the singular other; show restraint. This step back is the other weak force: I am unable not to hold myself back in my singularity. Therefore I am able to be unable to be unscathed, which means that I am able not to touch them. Let them be protected by the name, by the proper name, by the idiom, by the catachresis, by the metonymy. In other words, recognize that the name is a kind of shield that allows the animals to be left alone.

6. Recognize that this "recipe" is not sufficient. The more sufficient response is still not sufficient because there is still suffering, necessarily. The animals are still eaten either "metaphorically" or "literally"; you have to eat after all. If after naming the animals we ate their bodies, their flesh, their meat, in other words, if we did more than internalize them through the name, if we really ate the animals, how could we not suffer from bad conscience?³⁴ We would suffer from a feeling that our hospitality was insufficient, an insufficiency that would motivate us to eat better, with a tendency toward the least violence. The insufficiency brings us to the seventh and final step.

7. Always feel compassion for the others who are suffering. Have passion with them (com-passion), which means that you must recognize that the animals, all the others, have fear (not anxiety) in the face of death since death always comes from the others, from me or you or us or them.³⁵

What the recipe describes is an experiment or a test; it amounts to a reversal. Let us try to reverse unconditional inhospitality, the worst, into unconditional hospitality. Unconditional hospitality is not the best but only the less bad. Indeed, it is a kind of mirror image of the worst. By being vulnerable in the way we have described, there is no guarantee that the worst will be avoided. The recipe describes a dangerous experiment. Prudence is required. Unconditional hospitality takes up the Kantian insight that the law must have the form of universality; it must be applied equally or univocally to everyone no matter who or what. Even with this appeal to the Kantian insight concerning the form of the law, we still have a kind of mirror image. In the worst, every single living being is evil except one, me, man; only one is good. But at the limit in the worst, all living beings are evil, and all universally must *therefore* be destroyed. In the reversal, evil is affirmed; the fault, which seemed to be a property of man alone, is distributed to all living beings (but the limit between living and non-living is, as Derrida would say, porous). None of them universally is perfect, like a mechanism. The reversal then is an experiment on the equality of violence, which means that all living beings, no matter how violent, are treated equally in the sense of hospitality: all are welcome. Unconditional hospitality is forgiveness. Yet hospitality and equality here do not really function as values; they are instead what I would call "pre-values," valuationally indeterminate. If every single living being, including me, is evil, if every single living being abuses power, then it is not possible to decide which one is more deserving of forgiveness. Is it the one who most abuses power or the one who abuses it the least? Yet it is not possible to welcome every single living being no matter what, unconditionally. There are always conditions. This is a fact, a "Faktum" or *archi-fact*, something always already made or done (taking the word "fact" in the literal sense of something made). When one ups the ante on hospitality—this upping the ante is also the central idea of the "recipe"—then one is forced due to these factual conditions to a decision and make a valuation, which will have the effect of excluding. There are still more living beings who demand forgiveness.

Notes

1. Jacques Derrida, *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris: Minuit, 1972), 133. English translation by Alan Bass as *Margins of Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 112–3. Hereafter cited as MP, with reference first to the French, then to the English translation.
2. Derrida, *Voyous* (Paris: Galilée, 2003), 11–2. English translation by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas as *Rogues* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), xii–xiii. Hereafter cited as V.
3. We cannot forget here Foucault's reflections on life and bio-power.
4. Derrida, *De quoi demain... Dialogue* (Paris: Fayard/Galilée, 2001), 106. English translation by Jeff Fort as *For What Tomorrow... A Dialogue* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 63. Hereafter cited as DQD.
5. Derrida, *L'animal que donc je suis* (Paris: Galilée, 2006), 81. English translation of Chapter One by David Will as "The Animal that Therefore I am (More to Follow)," in *Critical Inquiry* 28 (winter 2002). English translation of Chapter Three by David Wills as "And Say the Animal Responded," in *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal*, ed. Cary Wolfe (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003). The untranslated portions of *L'animal* will be referred to by A; these translations are my own. The citation of the two English translations will bear additional abbreviations in order to distinguish them: "The Animal that Therefore I am" will be abbreviated as ATIA; "And Say The Animal Responded" will be abbreviated as ASAR.
6. This essay summarizes part of a book-length manuscript called *This Is Not Sufficient: An Essay on Animality in Derrida*, which is under review at Columbia University Press.
7. Derrida, *Le "concept" du 11 septembre, Dialogues à New York (octobre-décembre 2001) avec Giovanna Borradori. With Jürgen Habermas* (Paris: Galilée, 2004), 174. Originally published in English as *Philosophy in the Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 117. Hereafter cited as CS11.
8. Derrida, *Mémoires d'aveugle, L'autoportrait et autres ruines* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1990), 96. English translation by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas as *Memoris of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and other Ruins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 92.

9. In *Rogues*, Derrida says, "Hypothesis in Greek will have signified before all else the base, the infrastructure *posed* in what lies beneath a foundation. As such, it will have been a figure for the bottom [*fond*] or the basement, the groundwork or the foundation, and thus the principle of the thing, the reason of an institution, the *raison d'être* of a science or a reasoning, of a logos or a logic, of a theory, rationalization, ratiocination. It will have also done this as the subject, substance, or supposition of a discourse, as a proposition, design, or resolution, but most often as a condition" (V, 190/136). Sovereignty, in contrast, is unconditional and an-hypothetical.

10. See the long discussion of the Cold War that extends from CS11, 142/92 to CS11, 150/100.

11. Derrida, "Foi et savoir," in *La Religion*, Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo, eds. (Paris: Seuil, 1996). English translation by Samuel Weber as "Faith and Knowledge," in *Religion*, Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo, eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

12. Derrida, *Points de suspension, Entretiens* (Paris: Galilée, 1992), 293. English translation by Peggy Kamuf and others as *Points... Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. Elizabeth Weber (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 279.

13. See also "The University Without Condition," in *Without Alibi*, 224.

14. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), 31. English translation by Brian Massumi as *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 21.

15. Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone*, trans. Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 28, 32, 38–9.

16. Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Minuit, 1967), 333. English translation by Gayatri Spivak as *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 234.

17. Derrida, *La Voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983 [1967]), 115. English translation by David B. Allison as *Speech and Phenomena* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 102.

18. Derrida, *L'Écriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967), 191. English translation by Alan Bass as *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of

Chicago, 1978), 130.

19. Ibid., 173/117.

20. Derrida, *Apories* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), 77. English translation by Thomas Dutoit as *Aporias* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 41.

21. Martin Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," trans. Karsten Harries, *The Review of Metaphysics* Vol. XXXVIII, no. 3, issue no. 151 (March 1985), 474–5. French translation in *Écrits politiques, 1933–1966* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 104.

22. Derrida, *De l'esprit* (Paris: Galilée, 1987), 65. English translation by Geoff Bennington and Rachel Bowlby as *Of Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), 39.

23. In "And Say the Animal Responded," we can see the risk of biologism once more. Here Derrida questions the opposition between animalistic or better mechanical reaction and human responsibility; he says, "Why do the stakes here seem to be so much higher? In problematizing, as I have done, the purity and the indivisibility of a line between reaction and response, and especially the possibility of tracing such a line, between the human in general and the animal in general, one risks—anxiety about such an idea and the subsequent objections to it cannot but be forthcoming—casting doubt on all responsibility, every ethics, every decision, and so on" (ASAR, 172–3/128).

24. Derrida, *De l'esprit*, 66; *Of Spirit*, 40.

25. Derrida, *La Dissemination* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 165. English translation by Barbara Johnson as *Dissemination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 143. In the English translation, "voyou" is rendered as "vagrant." My thanks to Michael Naas for alerting me to this usage.

26. It is important to realize that "following" ("suivre") in Derrida does not mean blind obedience to a program. Therefore at times in this text, especially when I speak of the "recipe," I will be consciously un-Derridean.

27. What is a singularity? A singularity is *not* a particular that we are able to classify under a general concept. No mental representation can be formed of it, although a singularity is not alien to a representation. A singularity cannot be translated, although translation is not alien to it. A singularity is informal, although formalization is not alien to it. A singularity

is not external to repeatability; it is the outside of repeatability. A singularity is a "boiling point," as Deleuze would say; it is a "statement," as Foucault would say. Here is a statement: "I am afraid to die." Every time anyone utters or gestures towards the fear of death, we have a statement. A singularity is an event, a "once and for all." It is a discontinuity. A singularity is irreplaceable and there can be no substitute for it, as Derrida would say. It is a date, the day on which the crocuses come up in the spring, the 8th of April. It is the day on which one's parents die, not both, just one, but the one being dead kills the other. This world goes away and with it the individuation that comes from one's proper name. Only under this condition of losing one individuation, however, is it possible for one to assume one's proper name. This taking up crosses through the singularity of the event—and this crossing through must happen—but the tracing through the event refers back to the event and refers ahead to the event to come. Like death, the irreplaceability of singularity is the impossible itself, and yet my death is, as Heidegger would say, my ownmost possibility (of having no more possibilities). As a singularity, a life is at once irreplaceable and replaceable. This point about singularity and irreplaceability is developed more fully in the book *This is Not Sufficient*.

28. But we should not forget that Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* also engage in discussions of the date.

29. Here, through the specific internalization of the name (and not the flesh of the animals), we could advocate a kind of vegetarianism that is compatible with a minimal carnivorousism. But there are other reasons for advocating strict literal vegetarianism, reasons such as the treatment of animals on the industrialized farms. We must, it seems to me, do everything to support the advocates of animal rights.

30. We can find a version of the double bind in the essay "Typewriter Ribbon." Here, Derrida says, "Will this be possible for us? Will we one day be able to, and in a single gesture, to join the thinking of the event to the thinking of the machine? Will we be able to think, what is called thinking, at one and the same time, both what is happening (we call that an event) and the calculable programming of an automatic repetition (we call that a machine). For that, it would be necessary in the future (but there will be no future except on this condition) to think both the event and the machine as two compatible or even in-dissociable concepts. Today they appear to us to be antinomic." See Derrida, "Le ruban de machine à écrire," in *Papier Machine* (Paris: Galilée, 2001), 34. English translation as "Typewriter Ribbon," in *Without Alibi*, ed. and trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 72.

31. See "Convention on the Rights of the Child, G.A. res. 44/25, annex, 44 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49) at 167, U.N. Doc. A/44/49 (1989), entered into force Sept. 2 1990." This text can be found online at: <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instrree/k2crc.htm>. Article seven, clause one states, "The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents." This article provides support for the importance or necessity of the name. But it is not my intention to suggest that animals have a *right* to a name. Because every singularity is necessarily connected to iterability, naming cannot be avoided. What I am advocating, on the basis of the fact of singularity, is a certain kind of naming, a naming *well*, which reduces the violence against animals and guards their singularity for the future.

32. In order to pay off, the bet requires a transformative experience, a conversion experience, an experience, as Deleuze would say, of the "sentiendum."

33. There is an "unlivable contradiction" here in the concept of hospitality: unconditional and conditional at the same time. See Derrida, "Hospitality: Session of January 8, 1997," in *Acts of Religion*, 360. Also see Derrida, "Une certaine possibilité impossible de dire l'événement," in *Dire l'événement, est-ce possible?* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 98. Here Derrida says that the event appears as such only as being repeatable; uniqueness as such is thinkable only as iterable. Substitution replaces the irreplaceable.

34. The role of "radical evil" here should make one hesitate before one associates what Derrida says or what I am saying with liberalism. While I am not an expert in liberal political theory, it seems to me that it revolves around the desire to have a good conscience, to think that by being a vegetarian, for example, one can stop worrying about animal welfare and sleep well at night. The main idea for me, however, is that evil and violence, radical evil, cannot be reduced, cannot be eliminated from the roots of life itself, and therefore there is no escape from bad conscience. Here we can add that all "life-ism" is based in "mortalism." For more on "life-ism" and "mortalism," see my book *The Implications of Immanence* (The Bronx: Fordham University Press, 2006), especially Chapter Ten.

35. See also Deleuze and Guattari, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2. Mille plateaux*, 294; *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 240. Here Deleuze and Guattari speak of being "responsible in principle before" animals due to the affectivity of the animals. In Francis Bacon, Deleuze (without Guattari) is even more insistent on responsibility "before" (devant)

the animals. See Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. Logique de la sensation*, 21; *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, 22.