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DECONSTRUCTING SATAN: THE HERMENEUTICS OF MILTON'S
"PARADISE REGAINED"

Rice University
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DECONSTRUCTING SATAN: THE HERMENEUTICS OF MILTON'S PARADISE REGAINED

by

LINDA S. REVERE

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

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HOUSTON, TEXAS

MAY, 1982
ABSTRACT

DECONSTRUCTING SATAN: THE HERMENEUTICS OF MILTON'S PARADISE REGAINED

by

Linda S. Revere

Humanist literary scholars and teachers, implicated in but unaware of the metaphysics of presence grounding their method, have long practiced mediating the literary artwork, representing it as an organic, structured design of signs identical with certain ideas and correspondent mimetically with extra-linguistic reality. These rationalists spatialize the artwork, locking its signifiers into a teachable object or centered design so that the body of literature becomes a collection of objects, a body of texts spatializing voice and consciousness, quantified knowledge packaged and assigned meanings or truth. For phenomenologists like Heidegger and certain post-structuralists, the textuality of the work is an ontological mood or moods, a Befindlichkeit or openness to being-in-the-world, a special thrownness with certain possibilities for self-actualizing within that world of the artwork. Signifiers, linguistic things in the phenomenological sense, are specially measured and related to one another for
Dasein to interpret as limitations and possibilities, horizons for being. The phenomenological post-modern imagination is hermeneutical, assigning the reader to explore the mood working in the world of the work. Post-modernists espouse a violent hermeneutical discourse, a re-opening of the site of the traditionalist historical sedimentation, a freestyle of criticism so that the artworks are not seen as objects enduring through time with certain inviolable truths or interpretations but rather as human worlds or experiences for that can be interpreted endlessly without closure by all cultures and societies. Paradise Regained is such a decentered text, a poem that questions itself as other than a supplement to the Biblical Word. It is marked by a complementarity, a measuring and metonymy of differences traced in the trackless desert, the groundless ground of the desert where Satan tempts Christ to despair or be saved with self-wrought miracles. The Word as Sign is under attack in Paradise Regained, parodied and supplemented, dismantled and remarked in the play of differing interpretations given the world brought forth in it. Humanists have frozen the poem into various molds or centered designs as a theological tract, a drama, an autobiographical psychomachia; but a post-modern reading can re-open the possibilities, the existential mood of the poem. Satan, the ultimate rationalist and metaphysical thinker, tries to impose his interpretive strategies onto Christ,
who uses a deconstructive reinterpretation to work out the meaning of his existence as an aporia in Being.
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Chapter 1

DISCOVERING LOGOCENTRISM: BEING, TIME, AND THE MATTER OF THE TEXT

Madness and philosophy appear to have equal differential play in contemporary poetics: the project underway shows signs of being a threatening and sensitive issue, a critical re-opening and re-thinking of language and being from an anxious, dreadful post-existentialist consciousness. Derrida’s splitting of the word, fissuring signifier from signified, has released enormous energy from a seemingly small mass, shocking those observers comfortable only with manipulating word-signs and chains of discourse as basic building blocks in a critical structure. Humanist scholars and teachers, implicated but unaware of the metaphysics of presence grounding their methods, have long practiced mediating the literary text. Representing it as an organic, constructed design of signs identical with themselves and correspondent mimetically with extralinguistic reality, the rationalist spatializes the literary artwork, locking its linguistic signifiers into position to illustrate a truth-product. This will-to-power, a delusion of authority and knowledge, gives its possessors a sense of control and mastery over the fleeting temporality of human being articulated in the world of the artwork.
under analysis. Thus centered, analyzed, and "cured," the literary text is "explained," "clarified," or at least deemed suitable for consumption by other rational beings. Literature considered as a collection of objects, a body of texts of spatialized voice and consciousness, becomes the Library, the canon or critical rubric, the conventionalized tradition familiar to generations of Western humanists schooled in Socratic, Aristotelian, and Neo-Classical principles based on rationalist epistemology.

Madness began to challenge reason and rational epistemology under the aegis of idealism and "Romanticism" in the latter eighteenth century; but the will-to-power infecting the rational Cartesians and British empiricists was at the heart of Kantian, Hegelian, and Coleridgean aesthetics as well. The Cartesian cogito, a rational subject involved in calculating, analyzing, quantifying and defining the Other in the universe or environment as objective reality, was given new imaginative powers and control in the infinite "I AM" of Coleridge's creator-subject. Whereas Cartesian and empirical rationalists had validated the mimetic poetics of the ancients, affirming the artwork as formally made, ordered, coherent, unified and complete as represented logos, the German idealists and their British disciples invented a new psychological mechanism, the active constitutive imagination of the
subject-artist, to explain the beautiful aesthetic object. In his *Philosophy of Fine Art*, Hegel argued eloquently for an ideal or Absolute Mind-Spirit at work in aesthetic plastic configurations of matter and idea. He elevated art to the same plane of religion and philosophy, all three being phenomenological realizations of the ideal working in the world and mankind. But the giant figure in this new movement against passive associative reflection was Immanuel Kant, whose aesthetics speculations have become constitutive of several contemporary schools, especially formalism and existential phenomenology.

A rare and original combination of philosophy and nascent psychology, Kant's theories marked the introduction of several important contributions to modern critical theory and poetics. Arguing that the subjective mind is partially constitutive of the phenomenal world, Kant proposed that raw perceptual data of entities and events concerning the things themselves is actively organized by *a priori* spatio-temporal forms. Then the symbolic mode of the understanding takes over, further processing mental products through multi-plex categories. Thus for the Kantian, the Cartesian things-in-themselves, objective reality, would be unknowable. Furthermore, Kant postulated that the aesthetic judgment is subjective and emotional, rather than cognitive and intellectual in a rational sense.
Aesthetic judgments are disinterested, removed from utilitarian purposiveness, but organized by internal principles and purposiveness in the artwork or beautiful object itself. In excusing the artwork from a useful existence, Kant isolated it still more from other phenomenal entities and gave impetus to organic and symbolist interpretations. In fact, the famous organicist theories that followed Kantian speculations were actually a re-discovery or dis-closure of ancient *physis*, the Aristotelian or pre-Socratic explanation for the unfolding process of truth revealed and set forth as completely present to itself in *logos*. Set against the background of the gathering and disseminating of *physis* and *logos*, Coleridge's organicism and intricate theory of psychological mechanism is still a willful assertion of voice and presence. Moreover, the Kantian explanation which serves as ground for it is faithful to the metaphysics of presence also: the phenomenal creations of the understanding are still *eidos*, subjective ideas present in the mind, represented by the mind to itself.

Caught in the Kantian dilemma of bridging the subject-object gap, Coleridge invents a psychological simulacrum, the creative imagination. Intensely active, this vital bi-partite mechanism, supplemented by the fancy, which creates the world of inanimate lifeless objects, is
a copy of the mind of God and the ultimate onto-theological
ground in the history of metaphysics. As echo of the
infinite I AM, the creature-subject's primary and
secondary imaginations repeat the eternal act of God in
creating the world, and art is specifically created in the
secondary imagination, which re-orders, dissolves, and
generates, re-creating an organic aesthetic product in a
mysterious but marvelous human process. The creative
imagination is therefore a rational madness over which the
creator-subject has a measure of control: as repetition
and representation of the divine creative act, the
aesthetic powers of the artist are set firmly in absolute
ground, a metaphysics of presence.

Proposing that beauty is the unity of harmony and
form, a "multeity in unity," Coleridge endorses the
Pythagorean definition, firmly metaphysical, that beauty
is "the reduction of many to one." Broaching an offer
"as both paraphrase and corollary," Coleridge fits equally
well within the Kantian parameters:

The sense of beauty subsists in simultaneous intuition of the relation of
all to a whole: exciting an immediate
and absolute complacency, without intervenence, therefore, of any interest,
sensual or intellectual. ¹

The poem or aesthetic creation is non-utilitarian, lacks
external purposiveness, and has an emotional, rather than
intellectual cast. Moreover, disparate perceptual data
processed from difference or multitude to unity is so orchestrated by the subjective mind: the beautiful object, generated in part by emotional and mental faculties, becomes a unified re-presentation, half-created and half-perceived, present as imaginative simulacrum, a phenomenal bridge spanning the post-Kantian gap with the things themselves in nature. In addition, Coleridge introduces the symbol, a relatively vague embodiment of presence forged in the creative process, and representative of the present in both temporal flux and the eternal onto-theological dimension:

Now an allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses; the principal being more worthless even than its phantom proxy, both alike unsubstantial, and the former shapeless to boot. On the other hand a symbol... is characterized by a translucence of the special in the individual, or of the general in the special, or of the universal in the general; above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal. It always partakes of the reality which renders it intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity of which it is the representative.²

Even more graphic and illustrative of Coleridge's metaphysical and logocentric bias are passages in his famous manifesto, Biographia Literaria. Dichotomizing presence and things in the world into bipolar opposites, subject and object, Coleridge affirms the mimetic
correspondence theory of truth:

For we can know that only which is true:
and the truth is universally placed in
the coincidence of the thought with the
thing, of the representation with the
object represented.

Now the sum of all that is merely ob-
jective we will henceforth call nature,
confining the term to its passive and
material sense, as compromising all the
phenomena by which its existence is made
known to us. On the other hand the sum
of all that is subjective we may compre-
hend in the name of the self or intelli-
gence. Both conceptions are in necessary
antithesis. Intelligence is conceived
of as exclusively represented, nature as
exclusively represented; the one conscious
the other as without consciousness. 3

Clearly, Coleridge is fervently Cartesian here. In fact,
speaking of "natural philosophy" as the marriage of
Newtonian mechanics and theology, he praises elsewhere
Descartes's skeptical method for its "utter difference"
from "irreligion." 4 He offers as its supplement a
humanistic transcendental philosophy, a brand of meta-
physics combining idealism and realism. Quite possibly,
he is anticipating a prototypical existential phenomenology.

Following this specific endorsement of rationalist
physics (Newton) and metaphysics (Descartes) is Coleridge's
innovative psychology of the imagination, formulated with
a heavy debt to Kant. His analysis of the subjective
imagination also carries a theological tone: imitative or
grounded in the "infinite I AM" of God, the Absolute Mover,
the creative agent or poet "brings the whole soul of man
into activity. . . . He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends. . . fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power. . . imagination."⁵ The poem itself is clearly a spatialized metaphor of fused and differential opposites, an object and logos present as a holistic unity, "the parts of which mutually support and explain each other."⁶ In other words, a subject-poet given the efficacy of a kind of absolute presence by virtue of the artistic imagination produces a fused logocentric phenomenal entity, the "legitimate poem," an organic structure present to itself as autonomous unity. Thus Coleridge's poetical and philosophical theories accord with the development and evolution of logocentric metaphysics and onto-theology.

Seminal for the advance of modern British, French, and American poetics, Coleridge's contributions can scarcely be exaggerated. His vague and mysterious notion of the symbol as a vehicle of the beautiful, a mediation between the universal and the particular, a part of the transcendental power of the mind, stirred the imaginations of the French critics. Shapeless energy, vitality, and spirit, the symbol is a synecdochic node within the poem, a gathering of presence capable of organic growth and aesthetic experience in itself. The French symbolists, Carlyle, and Emerson, saw in the symbol a process of exfoliation imitative of nature itself; the world is
composed of symbols, and the poetic symbol is a special insight into that phenomenon. In addition, the symbol could be a means or mode of transcending the subjective; the symbol promises access to other minds and intersubjective communion.

Chief among the British neo-Coleridgean symbolists was Thomas Carlyle, for whom the symbol can show "concealment and yet revelation."\(^7\) Carlyle's symbol is a logos and mysterious divine essence, and the universe is replete with ontotheological essences:

\[
\text{The universe is but one vast symbol of God. ...what is man himself but a symbol of God; is not all that he does symbolical; a revelation to sense of the mystical God-given force that is in him.}\]

In America, Emerson agreed that nature itself is a symbol or symbolic language:

\[
\text{Things admit of being used as symbols because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part. ... The universe is the externalization of the soul. ... the world is a temple whose walls are covered with emblems, pictures, and commandments of the deity. ... We are symbols and inhabit symbols.}\]

Ernst Cassirer was the outstanding exponent of symbolic form as an intersubjective trans-cultural phenomenon; his Philosophy of Symbolic Form extrapolates the mysterious essence into a formal mode of experience through which man can discover enriched understanding and appreciation of the world. The truth of art lies in its pure forms; other
formal modes of symbolism through which man constructs his reality are language, myth, science, history, and religion. The tenor of his speculations is toward art as expression or discovery of means to expression, rather than mimesis:

Like all the other symbolic forms art is not the mere reproduction of a ready-made, given reality. It is one of the ways leading to an objective view of things and of human life. It is not an imitation but a discovery of reality. ...art is an intensification of reality. ...art may be described as a continuous process of concretion. ...it gives us the intuition of the form of things.\textsuperscript{10}

Neo-Coleridgean as well as neo-Kantian, Cassirer is interested in the aesthetic experience as the dynamic aspect of form, where beauty is an activity of the mind. He re-locates presence in formal simulacra; but he, too, is ultimately a metaphysician of the logocentric.

Two other well-known modern luminaries of transcendental symbolic form are Carl Jung and Northrop Frye. Jung, a disciple of Freud, broke with Freudian psychology to establish a psychology grounded in archetypes and "collective unconscious." Arguing with Freud's view of art as neurosis, Jung attacked the Freudian "symbol" as incorrectly named, since the phenomenon is "merely the role of signs or symptoms of the subliminal processes."\textsuperscript{11} Insisting that a work of art is "suprapersonal," Jung uses the (Coleridgean) organic metaphor to describe the creative process as "a living thing implanted in the human psyche," an "autonomous complex" that is "a split-off portion of the
psyche, which leads a life of its own inside the hierarchy of human consciousness." Itself a symbol, the artwork is full of isolatable manifestations of archetypes, which in themselves are categories or a priori ideas intangible save in primordial images of the artwork. Thus Jung invents a new system of presences which issue forth dynamically in a process of physis to stand forth present-to-themselves as objective other, logos manifest in the artwork. Furthermore, his inventive "autonomous complex," like the medieval soul, is a mysterious presence or essence, a logocentric being that is hypothetical construct or heuristic structure.

Like Jung, Northrop Frye is a system-builder who searches out essences and classifies under the rubric of "anatomy." Sometimes designated an archetypal critic due to his use of the term in parts of his Anatomy of Criticism, Frye abhors romantic subjectivism and expressionism, preferring to prescribe a more rational scientific framework, a systematized, closed literary universe:

Frye's hope that literary critics may avoid the subjectivism and irresolvable disputes of taste, and thereby achieve objectivity of description, is based on his cornerstone assumption that all literary expression is controlled by a small number of abiding literary universals, 'four narrative pregeneric' categories which are 'logically prior' to the usual literary genres. These pregeneric mythoi, these models of all models, these deepest of structures which are the inevitable constituents
of a literary imagination, are not meant to be taken as the fictional projections of Frye's lively imagination: they are the fundamental object of the critical consciousness whose task is to receive these structures and communicate them to others.\textsuperscript{13}

And Frye's notions of myth are not necessarily self-evident either:

Northrop Frye's very successful \textit{Anatomy of Criticism} eventuated in a peculiar, aestheticized version of myth; the myth that Frye speaks of is wholly literary despite his struggles to give it a socio-historical respectability.\textsuperscript{14}

Indeed, for sophisticated readers familiar with the writings of Levi-Strauss, René Girard, and other anatomists of culture, Frye's system appears arbitrary, virtually naïve reductivism that suggests egoistic will-to-power.

Constricting literature as a whole into an object of study packaged for consumption according to idiosyncratic jargon and guidelines became popular for a time, perhaps due to the entrenched but moribund establishment of formalism and New Criticism in American education:

Frye's basic theoretical conceptions are unrelentingly spatial: he realizes that the system he proposes can stand only if the structure is "real," if it can stay closed, coherent, and self-contained. . . . Frye's entire literary universe (the "real" structure) stands isolated in its autonomous space, the river of time running far distantly beneath it; it is a system of rich but limited possibilities of modal deployment and combination;
available to all writers as a simultaneity of options no matter what their moment in time or place in space.\textsuperscript{15}

Frye's debt to New Critical formalism, especially its tendency to reify and spatialize literary experience, can be found throughout the Anatomy. For example, in his chapter called "Theory of Symbols," Frye begins by defining it:

[The symbol] means any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention. A word, a phrase, or an image used with some kind of special reference are all symbols when they are distinguishable elements in critical analysis. Even the letters a writer spells his words with form part of his symbolism in this sense. . . . Criticism as a whole in terms of this definition, would begin with, and largely consist of, the systematizing of literary symbolism.\textsuperscript{16}

Frye does not approve of paraphrasing the language of a poem either. His analysis of the symbol in the literary universe is slightly reminiscent of Cassirer, since he envisions the symbol as a form modified somewhat depending on its "phase": Frye proposes that symbols come in at least three phases or levels, which are the image, the archetype, and the monad. Thus Frye manages to be New Critic, myth critic, and a proto-structuralist all at the same time. His spatialization of modes and phases is his debt to Western metaphysics, as Lentricchia's graphic description aptly clarifies. The conventions and genres he sets up to map and spatialize his literary universe
reify the human experience depicted in literature, essentially offering a rather pessimistic and conservative legacy for post-modern writers and critics.

Essentially a vague and provocative element in Coleridge's discourse on poetics, the symbol has been written in many ways in continental and American poetics. However, the apparent variety of interpretations, though marked by some differences, is subject in every case to metaphysical assumptions of presence: the symbol or the symbolic form is indicative of physis exfoliating truth from concealment to unconcealment, then coming to stand with presence and static being in a reified form. Locatable by a rational analytical methodology, the symbol is still somehow mysterious, concealed, irrational. As synechdochic image, archetype, monad, or the artwork itself, the symbolic form becomes and so is.

Other than the possibilities for the symbol and its being, the Coleridgean legacy was immensely important for formalism, or the New Criticism that has dominated teaching and criticism in past decades. The New Criticism has probably been the most influential and vital critical movement lately; it continues to dominate the more conservative professional journals and academic circles. Under attack today by linguistics enthusiasts, neo-Marxists, structuralists and post-structuralists, and
certain psychoanalytical critics, the New Criticism or formalism renders literature eminently teachable or easily consumed so that the audience can assume that a certain quantifiable knowledge has been achieved after a prolonged explication de texte or arduous anatomization: the New Critical exercise is a powerful ratification of self-worth. Frank Lentricchia astutely ascribes its downfall to its success: "too many generations of students came out of New Critical classrooms convinced that their teachers possessed knowledge of the 'hidden' meanings of texts to which there was no systematic and disciplined access."\(^\text{17}\)

In another very recent study of the current state of critical theory, Gerald Graff argues that New Criticism is often repudiated due to the need of a new movement to appear innovative and radical. He attributes the success of New Criticism to a determination to rescue literary study and scholarship from the enthusiastic impressionism of the rising bourgeoisie of the last hundred years.\(^\text{18}\)

Attributing modernist principles and bias to New Critical theory, Graff links its commitment to mimesis with a frozen spatiality and center and "a faith in the constitutive power of the imagination, a confidence in the ability of literature to impose order, value, and meaning in the chaos and fragmentation of industrial society."\(^\text{19}\)

Truth, high seriousness, and profound depths of meaning in literature were other goals of Modernism, says Graff; art
as a veritable religion enjoyed a special hold on such a critical tradition. Throughout his intriguing study and definition of post-modernism and poetics, Graff expresses the curious ambivalence toward New Criticism, an attitude often encountered in academic circles today.

Above all, the New Critical or formalist approach is a study—a close study—of texture, surface, structure. The poem, play, or novel is reified into an object or mechanical entity with assembled parts, central design, center, pattern, or motifs of images. The literary language is often considered metaphysically, point-by-point, detail-by-detail. Beginning with a critical foreconceit, the New Critic proceeds through the "nows" of the work, where each "now" is a point, word-sign, or image. Some of the now-points are considered to assume greater meaning or significance at the discretion of the particular critic subject, whose foreconceit or mental paradigm seems to appear of its own accord in the artwork during the dissection. Each detail is represented by a word or chain of word-signs; each word or chain of word-signs represents an atomic now-point in the Aristotelian sense. As the formalist or New Critic reads linear space-points or words in the text, the "now"-points of time march by too. The reading process (and the reader-subject) control both space and time of the text by assuming that each individual space-point and each individual time-
moment enjoys serial, linear presence. Words and details (chains of words) in the text thus incarnate a presencing or being-present based on the linear reading procedure. The presence accrued in the points of space and their companion points of time establish a line, our familiar linear reading process. Because a New Critic or formalist is interested in the form or space-shape of the artwork, the reading process from point-to-point begins with a forestructure in the critic's mind and privileges those points or word-signs and chains important to the forestructure until the telos in the mind of the reader is completely assembled. Thus privileged "motifs" or symbols or archetypes, given special being by the reader, appear to surface in the text, "proving" the special space-shape and its concomitant "meaning" or value system. Moreover, because the words of the aesthetic artwork are matched with presence in the temporal "nows," the words of the artwork take on the aura of unified presence, with signifier-signified bonding. The text itself, neatly reified into a circle in which the end proves the forestructure or beginning thesis statement, is seen as a coherent, unified structure being-present to itself: all temporal and spatial points are grasped as Gestalt unity. Thus incarnated as logos, the Word becomes flesh, and the humanizing experience of temporality is repressed, virtually eliminated.
The crack-up of our familiar onto-theological metaphysics can be traced to these incarnations or assumptions about space, time, and being-present. Fault lines can be observed in the texts of Aristotle through those of Descartes, Kant and Hegel, Coleridge and his symbolist disciples, philosophers of artistic and cultural symbolic forms, New Critics and formalists, and even certain brands of structuralism and other contemporary movements. Leading the post-modern assault on logo-centered poetics and humanist metaphysics, philosophers Nietzsche and Heidegger have questioned absolute or divine presence as a creation of the tradition and the intuitive self-presencing and consciousness of the subject-cogito. In particular, Heidegger's re-thinking over a long period of history of such crucial issues as being, time, and language has had strong repercussions on post-modern "post-structuralist" thinkers, poets, and aestheticians, especially Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, William Spanos, Geoffrey Hartman, J. Hillis Miller, Joseph Riddel, Paul A. Bové, and others. Re-examining the certitude of personal consciousness and concomitant questions of free will, meaning, ethics, and values, post-existentialists have been open to new ways of thinking the temporality of human existence, the being of the person, the "closed" text, and the "unified" sign. Far from being a philosophy of the absurd, an aesthetic madness, or a barbaric attack on humanism and Western
culture, post-structuralist or Heideggerian phenomenology can be accepted as a serious attempt to disclose the relationships between human being, time, and language, especially poetic language, which speaks being.

In the vanguard of this post-structuralist movement is Jacques Derrida, whose "deconstructive" methodology and pronouncements have been so disturbing to bewildered humanists, scholars, and interested students of theory. Whatever their immediate reactions to the abstruse and elaborate arguments of Derrida, audiences have often settled for simplistic reductions, partial paraphrase, shibboleth and neologism. Incorporated into conversation, seminar papers or colloquia, his iconoclastic thought has been accommodated, "explained" with varying success, considered and dismissed, or reified into a philosophy itself.

Quite a few commentators have noted Derrida's debt to the philosophy of Heidegger and Nietzsche, however; his thought is certainly worthy of consideration as a commentary on Heidegger and post-existential phenomenology. Heidegger's name reverberates throughout Derrida's essays, articles, and books: although extremely critical of Heidegger's humanism and entrapment in logocentric metaphysics, Derrida has quietly adopted issues and topics of Heideggerian thought. Exhorting post-moderns to echo "Heideggerian hope," the Heideggerian "quest for the proper
word and the unique name,"\(^{20}\) Derrida ends his important essay on différence and the sign in *Speech and Phenomena*. Throughout his works, Derrida names Heidegger to cite the philosopher's failures; yet often Heideggerian issues and language are folded within Derrida's thoughts, appropriated without comment. It is a curious relationship, noticeable to students of Heidegger who realize that the strategy is part of the game. Because Derrida's appropriation and supplementation of Heidegger's thought is so outstanding and yet notorious, his criticism of logocentrism and metaphysics vis-à-vis post-modern poetics and literature will be considered separately and in full detail in subsequent chapters.

But Derrida is not the only contemporary pirate of the methodology, issues, terminology, and hermeneutical violence introduced by Heidegger's overthrow of metaphysics and speculations on the nature and use of poetic language and the literary sign. A host of Heideggerian disciples cognizant of the simplistic assumptions of time and space in the text, in the word, in the presence of spatiality and meaning of the critical paradigm are clamoring for a renewed attempt or disclosure of the temporality of human experience and being intrinsic to literature and language. Their longing to free the temporality of the text from a repressive spatial metaphoricity has affinities with the Derridean call for freeplay and decentered discourse; but
crucial differences exist between more orthodox, consistent Heideggerians and their Derridean Others. Inspired by the illumination of literature as ontological mood and existential possibility, many of these critics seem to understand the dynamics of Dasein, Being-in-the-world as a vast system of inter-related references, anxiety and ontological dread, inauthentic and authentic modes of existence, careful and concerned living and speaking, the necessity of re-thinking the difference between Being and beings, time and temporality. A few of these phenomenological adherents are knowledgeable of Heidegger's specific work on problems posed by artworks and literary language, particularly *What Is Metaphysics, Poetry, Language and Thought* (with its important essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art"), and essays in his *On the Way to Language*. Critics and students of Heidegger who are also informed and enlightened by the reflections and premises of both *Being and Time* and the later *On Time and Being*, plus *Identity and Difference, Discourse on Thinking and What Is Called Thinking?* find even more reason to be persuaded that the history of Western philosophy and epiphenomenal theories of poetics, whether classical mimesis, expressive, formalist, or ideological, are conspicuously vulnerable to hermeneutic violence and disclosure.
Heavily influenced by Sartrean studies of consciousness and Sartre's adoption of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Paul de Man was an early vociferous detractor of New Criticism and its ontological autonomous literary constructs, claiming in *Blindness and Insight* (1971) that Wimsatt and other formalist New Critics had ignored existential intentionality and intent of the consciousness that conceived and produced the artwork or poem. Insisting that finite meanings cannot be assigned to a literary text and that the act of reading (akin to Heideggerian *aletheia*?) is "an endless process in which truth and falsehood are inextricably intertwined," de Man foresaw a crisis in criticism and critical methodology. Arguing that there are no privileged points from which readers can assign meaning to a text, de Man charged that any interpretive act or reading is somehow incomplete or "inauthentic" in the Heideggerian sense. Already convinced that literary language is self-cancelling and self-conscious of its own inchoate possibilities, de Man chose to disagree with New Critics who privileged the poem as hypostatized act and reified construct. Instead, consumed with the conviction that conscious intentionality of both the artist and the critic constitutes the dialectical crux of valid or "interesting" misreadings, he elected to utilize Heidegger's hermeneutic circle to describe the whole process.
Examining that aspect of understanding named the "forestructure" by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, de Man argued that the literary work itself is an intentional "fore-structuring" for subsequent hermeneutical misreadings or acts of understanding, with more "valid" and "interesting" misreadings successfully detecting and developing inchoate possibilities unrealized in the authorial intentionality enmeshed in the literary language or textuality. Thus the concealed or "inauthentic" fragments or nuggets in the text can be discovered and realized authentically as the critic's intentional consciousness and being-in-the-world engages with authorial being-in-the-world concealed and revealed in the literary simulacrum:

For the interpreter of a poetic text, this foreknowledge is the text itself. Once he understands the text, the implicit knowledge becomes explicit and discloses what was already there in full light. Far from being something added to the text, the elucidating commentary simply tries to reach the text itself, whose full richness is there at the start. . . . The implicit foreknowledge is always temporally ahead of the explicit interpretive statement that tries to catch up with it.

Thus the critical acts of understanding and interpretation are disclosures made by and through the self-conscious language of the text or the intentional consciousness enmeshed in the text. Textual identity is comparable to Heidegger's *Dasein*, self-aware human "being-there"
engaged in expansive dialectical freeplay with unfolding hermeneutical discovery. Rather than being hypostatized act, Dasein's intentional form is deployed by inmixing with the Other, interpreting beings whose efforts extrapolate nascent possibilities, realizing holistic authenticity from an inauthentic (familiar) forestructure. Interpretation is thus the realization of possibility projected by the understanding of the forestructure, and its chief function is to expedite explicit articulation of possibility. Obviously, de Man has Heidegger's famous hermeneutic circle in mind: the forestructure, a vague uncritical awareness of a familiar piece of (Heideggerian) "equipment," is disclosed in its as-structure as projected by the understanding. The whole-part relationship is made more explicit, clarified, and exposed by the interpretive process which does not add to understanding, but rather aids it. For Heidegger, meaning is understanding forced to become aware of the "as-structure"; verbal meaning is always a derivative form of existential meaning. Never a representation in itself, or logos, such articulated interpretation is potentially assimilated into the familiar mode again, into the integrity of the (renewed) forestructure. As Heidegger explains it in section 32 of Being and Time:

The projecting of the understanding has its own possibility—-that of developing itself.
This development of the understanding we call "interpretation." In it the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it. In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself.

What is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it in the right way. This circle of understanding is not an orbit in which any random kind of knowledge may move; it is the expression of the existential fore-structure of Dasein itself. It is not to be reduced to the level of a vicious circle, or even of a circle which is merely tolerated. In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing.25

De Man also adopts Heideggerian temporality, restoring it to the text in order to counterbalance the illusion of closure; he foresees a virtual labyrinth for critical interpretive acts for a particular text:

Understanding can be called complete only when it becomes aware of its own temporal predicament and realizes that the horizon within which the totalization can take place is time itself. The act of understanding is a temporal act... it forever eludes totalization.26

Other than proceeding to excoriate the New Critics for opting for presence in reified form, uttering a warning to certain structuralists with the same tendencies, de Man drops the topic of temporality, apparently preferring to avoid it with generalized references. Briefly sketching Ludwig Binswanger's Heideggerian psychiatry and reflections on the psychology of the artist in his third chapter of Blindness and Insight, de Man notes that, for Binswanger,
literary art is concurrent with self-actualization:

Both are so intimately bound up with each other that the critic can move back and forth between the realm of the self and that of the work without any apparent tension. The expansion of the self seems to occur in and probably by means of the work. 27

Rinswanger seems to conflate the Romantic imagination with ontological dread in the Heideggerian sense, granting the artist special sensibilities to eschew alienated facticity in order to project and realize creative possibility.

After *Blindness and Insight*, de Man has chosen to fence with the Derrideans and post-structuralists who do not claim close ties with Heidegger, the so-called "Yale Mafia," whimsically so named by Frank Lentricchia in *After the New Criticism*. 28 He dubs de Man as their authority or "Godfather." Although de Man differs from Derrida somewhat, as illustrated by his critical chapter on Derrida's reading of Rousseau in *Blindness and Insight*, already he expresses the opinion that "Derrida's work is one of the places where the future possibility of literary criticism is being decided, although he is not a literary critic in the professional sense of the term and deals with hybrid texts." 29 His most recent contributions in Harari's edition of *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (1979) and in the Yale School collection, *Deconstruction and Criticism* (1979), indicate that he has deserted destruction for deconstruction.
De Man's defection has not left a vacuum for Heideggerian partisans, however. Their leadership has been assumed by William Spanos, a critic of Western logocentrism and metaphysics whose impassioned discourse against centering and spatialized iconicity has encouraged a resurgence of rectilinear Heideggerian hermeneutics, including *Boundary 2*, a prestigious journal, and a collection of essays and articles, *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature* (1976). In his own work, Spanos shows an impressive understanding of *Being and Time* in particular; familiar with de Man's brief interest in the hermeneutic circle, he is more willing to commit himself to the full argument and language of Heidegger's most famous work. The series of articles appearing since 1966 has a recurrent theme: any literature or criticism preoccupied with a teleological, well-made bourgeois world-picture of life or art is inauthentic discourse removed from the ambiguity and angst of temporal existence and the diachronicity of language itself.

Though he modestly attributes his interest in spatial iconicity to impetus from others, Spanos' attempt to apply Heidegger's fundamental ontology to the reading experience is truly innovative. Beginning in "Modern Literary Criticism and the Spatialization of Time" (1970), he has objected to the modern spatialization of the perception of time in the work, charging that this attitude
"does violence to the full existential experience."\textsuperscript{30} Arguing that literary experience should generate existential modes, he objects to the disinterested stance of the modernists, especially the New Critics, in which the work is visualized as a static synchronic construct or "whole without sequence."\textsuperscript{31} To ignore the sequential or temporal aspect of the work is to arrest its dynamics, leaving a vitiated image or Platonic \textit{eidolon}, he charges.

Particularly distressing for Spanos is the New Critical treatment of Shakespearean drama, laid out in a "pattern of resolved stresses" or "spatial images seen simultaneously from a teleological perspective."\textsuperscript{32} Thus robbed of ontological depths and temporal-existential movement, dramatic language is trivialized, and the reader's human being is given the false sense of angelic or divine intelligence distanced from the struggle of human existence and articulation.\textsuperscript{33} This unnatural epistemology underlies all modernist methodology, and it contributes to an inauthentic, tranquilized human-being. In this early article, Spanos attributes this tendency to an underlying religious fear, a "spiritual dread of space" predominant in both primitive societies and "those advanced societies that see beyond the deceptions of rational order."\textsuperscript{34} Abstract art arrests the mind from temporal flux, insulating it from threatening change and unexpected chaos, especially the threat of death and decay. Spanos especially
disparages Imagism, New Criticism, and Structuralism for this inauthentic mode of existence, aligning them with disregard for the earth and detached, disinterested technology, "an attitude of radical contempt for the world as strong as any medieval version."\textsuperscript{35}

In place of current formal emphasis, especially notable in New Criticism, Spanos invents the criterion of "time-shape" to judge a literary work: whether linear, circular, spiral, or discontinuous, it "inevitably reveals analogically a particular writer's perspective on the real world, no matter what the degree of his formalist concerns."\textsuperscript{36} Claiming that formalism levels all evaluative levels of distinction among works, he calls for recognition of the iconoclastic dangers built into literal language and situation.

In a subsequent article comparing the time-shapes of modern drama and ancient Greek plays, Spanos locates the spirit of Platonic essentialism in the mimetic tradition of Aristotle's teleological plot, suggesting that, despite the power of Greek drama, they were inauthentic in their determined form. Because the bourgeois "well-made" plays followed neo-classical mimetic principles, they were similarly incapable of capturing the ambiguous flux of existential experience. Placing much of the blame on rationalism and the triumphs of science in post-Renaissance
humanism, Spanos charges that time in such an intellectual climate is radically altered:

Time, in this system, becomes an objective and neutral series of quantitative units independent of human experience, in which objects of investigation exist as discrete spatial counters whose behavior is forecast and measured by their uniform motion in relationship to each other. In thus perceiving time "spatially" . . . the logical or scientific intellect transforms a motion involving change into the kinetics of mechanism. By bringing a stability into the universe, it enables itself to measure, control, and exploit the objects of nature for the "benefit of man's state."\(^3^7\)

In our materialist, utilitarian world, reality is distorted by such practices, because consciousness is not accessible to scientific tinkering. The clockwork universe and the rational, detached world-picture harden into a milieu of alienation, wherein language and mind become tools. Tranquillized and protected from ambiguity and change, human art becomes propaganda for the reasonable status quo.

Against this rational pride and middle-class complacency, Spanos sets Sartrean appropriation of Heideggerian ontology, arguing that Sartre and Heidegger raised the important questions challenging middle-class denial of Angst, nothingness, and the temporal flow of existential consciousness. He credits this re-opening of fundamental ontology and temporality with the rescue of
art by the dramatists of the absurd:

Man, according to Heidegger, whose ontology, along with Sartre's, is the model of absurdist literature, is thrown into a universe which is moving temporally towards no end and thus capable of justifying no thing, to say nothing about human life. Man (Dasein: being-there) is thus on a boundary. . . an alien, a stranger, in the world. All things in space and, especially, all events in time are ultimately foreign in their radical lack of definition, and thus appear to him in the guise of ominous menace and threat. 39

Spanos' explanation of the absurdist movement becomes increasingly technical as he draws his parallel to Dasein's ontological mode of dread or Angst, the anxiety of being-in-the-world, and Dasein's attempt to escape the burden of freedom:

Since the predicament in the precincts of the not-at-home is intolerable, men obsessively seek in bad faith to "objectify" (find objects for) dread. They seek, that is, to transform Angst or dread into fear, which has its source, not in nothing, but in something, that which is ready-to-hand. . . . For Heidegger and other existentialists, this self-deceptive anthropomorphic act is the equivalent of the Fall, since in domesticating the not-at-home, "Dasein turns away from itself." In other words, the cost of achieving the familiar "at-home" of "publicness" by objectifying or solidifying temporal flux or absurd time is the negation of individuality. . . human freedom and the possibilities inhering in the future. For, despite its nightmarish character, the not-at-home is the essential condition for the activation of care and thus for the humanization of men. 39
While Spanos may be completely justified in arguing that the theater of the absurd is grounded in the existential movement to return to temporal flux and open-ended freedom and possibility for thinking, acting, and being, he should have been more precise and careful to note that Heidegger specifically denies that authentic Dasein or being-in-the-world (even in its inauthentic mode) is absurd. Surely, what is truly absurd is the rational teleological spatialized action of ancient and neoclassical drama and the frozen, complacent bourgeois drama of deactivated time and meaningful existence and care.

Repeating many of his points in his study of Western drama, "The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Post-Modern Literary Imagination" (1972) is a call for image-breaking, a manifesto against spatialization in art and criticism along Heideggerian lines. Proposing that the post-modern imagination is militantly anti-Aristotelian and existential, he suggests that perhaps the Western structure of consciousness is totalitarian in the name of rational order. Thus post-modern literature and deconstructive criticism are anti-establishment:

the post-modern strategy of decomposition exists to generate rather than to purge pity and terror; to disintegrate, to atomize rather than to create a community . . . it exists to generate anxiety or dread: to dislodge the tranquillized individual from the "at-home of publicness."
Still equating authenticity with the courage to be absurd, "what Tillich calls the courage to be in the face of des-
pair, to affirm the Somethingness of Nothingness 'by
virtue of the absurd' or to risk letting Being be,"\textsuperscript{42}
Spanos champions the post-modern imagination for the
valiant fight against technology, positivism, arrogant
rationalism.

Concentrating on the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle
and parallels with the thought of Kierkegaard, Spanos'
contribution to the collection of essays edited by himself,
\textit{Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature}, is the
sequel to his existential analytic of Dasein. Echoing
de Man, he states:

\begin{quote}
Hermeneutics... does not discover anything radically new as such. It dis-
covers what the interpreter by his very nature as Dasein already has as a whole
("a totality of involvements") in advance, but is unaware of until the traditional
interpretive instrument breaks down, i.e., until a rupture occurs in the referential
surface, at which point the "as-structure" (the something \textit{as} something) that one has
in advance but has "forgotten" begins to achieve explicitness.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Reminding us, as does Heidegger himself, that the her-
meneutic circle is not a vicious circle because the
temporal hermeneutic does not begin from a static or
visual perspective of the whole, a telos or presence,
Spanos recalls the phenomenon of horizon:

\begin{quote}
The being 'presupposed' in the fore-
structure of existential-ontological
understanding is not a closed and static structure or form, a temporal existence recollected in tranquility, but...an open and freely expanding horizon. ... In other words, phenomenological inquiry moves carefully and interestingly through time, "destroying" the metaphysical standpoint (disclosing its blindness, its impulse to spatialize time) and simultaneously thematizing--bringing out into the open...the vague and indefinite primordial understanding of being covered over and forgotten in the tradition."44

A process of remembering and discovering, the hermeneutic circle operates in criticism as a key unlocking the coercive temporality of the spatial icon, denying the origins and presence of all privileged points. It is "un-methodical and generous dialogue," "Negative Capability," or "Gelassenheit," a Heideggerian term which "lets the being of a text be, which lets it say how it stands with being."45 Furthermore, Spanos links the hermeneutic circle with the three ek-stases of Heideggerian temporality; "repetition is both a mnemonic and an anticipatory--i.e., a de-structure and ek-static--movement."46 Stasis, epiphany, and repose are enemies of true temporality, deadening temptations estranging human being from authentic existence, encouraging despair, melancholy, and spiritual sloth—in short, entropy and emptiness.

By destroying the aesthetic expectation of telos and stasis, that privileged logocentric perspective of resolution and catharsis, the artist with the post-modern
imagination assigns the reader to himself or herself, forcing a re-assessment of selfhood and existential decision-making. The diachronic temporality of the language itself jolts the reader, creating a crisis and encounter with the Other; the text becomes an opportunity for authentic self-actualization, an encounter with "Thou" that carries the promise of risk and possibility.

Finally, this article gives Spanos an opportunity to differentiate his stance from those of Derrida and de Man. In an important footnote, he takes exception to their support of the idea of freeplay, suggesting in its place "free speech" defined as "the act of an instant of a being-in-the-world," a speech act grounded not in presence, but in nothingness or groundless ground. Furthermore, as an afterthought in the same note, he states that "Derrida's and de Man's Heidegger is not the Heidegger of Being and Time but a Heidegger interpreted (or deconstructed) through post-Structuralist eyes." Surely, many scholars of Heidegger's thought would agree. As editor of the volume in which this essay appears, Spanos writes in an introduction which expands the thought sketched in the footnote. Asserting that the "American Heidegger" of the Yale School is "the deconstructed Heidegger, 'saved' from metaphysics" whose project of decentering and surpassing metaphysics failed completion, thus merely pointing the way to deconstructive criticism, Spanos differentiates between
the "phenomenological Heidegger" and the "post-Structuralist Heidegger," although both posit valid positions for literary critics. Suggesting that the contributions in the volume by Corngold, Ferguson, Riddel, and Marshall are appropriations of the former, Spanos refuses to make a qualitative distinction because all post-moderns invariably call into question the will-to-power of "the imperatives of a hermeneutics in which Form (Being) is ontologically prior to temporality, Identity to difference, the Word to words." Instead, all phenomenological-deconstructive critics in the volume "themselves play freely around the preface, always interrogating its assertions to disclose what has been left unsaid, always, 'finally' discovering other possibilities concealed inside its bounding line."50

In the latest article of this series, "Breaking the Circle: Hermeneutics as Dis-Closure" (1977), Spanos is more specific about his break with American and continental Derrideans:

I am...in significant disagreement with Paul de Man's influential fundamental assumption--devised from Nietzsche's notion of art as the will to power and Derrida's apotheosis of writing over speech...about the literary tradition: the literary texts, unlike critical texts--and myths--have never been self-deceived; they have always been "fictional" i.e., characterized by a deliberate 'play' that consciously takes the void and the radical difference between sign and meaning, language and empirical reality, for granted.51
Elaborating on Heidegger's *Das Man*, being-towards-death, and *aletheia* as "the nature of truth and the problematics of its alternating concealment and disclosure," Spanos again criticizes the Western tendency to annul and reify *Angst* or existential dread:

This, of course, is what Derrida means when he speaks of logocentrism as a presencing of absence. Ultimately... the objectification of dread domesticates the not-at-home in the sense that it transforms the boundless temporality of being-in-the-world into a "world-picture": 1). a flattened out, static, and homogeneous Euclidean space—a totalized and ontologically depthless system of referents (a map)... 2). a self-bounded or sealed-off and inclusive image (icon or myth) if the objectifying consciousness is idealistic or sym-bolistic.

Citing Heidegger's critique of the logocentric tradition situated in reason, judgment, concept, definition, ground, and forgetting, Spanos denigrates the "derived notion of truth as correspondence—as agreement of the mind with its object of knowledge... as original and self-evident."

Taken out of its spatio-temporal existence, the thing is reified into "a pure and shareable presence," and Dasein's sense of time is a series of now-points undifferentiated from one another, yielding a timeless, "worldless world."

Essence precedes existence, says Spanos of this Platonic essentialism, and the onto-theology of Word, God, Omega, Absolute Idea, Unmoved Mover, all accompany this age or tradition of representation and logocentric *Weltbild*. 
Instead of this blind reason, faith in logos as image and idol, he proposes the "kinetic, explorative—and generous" language of "dialogic process":

[T]his process "locates" the truth of being in the interpreter's continuous ecstatic awareness of the ontologically alternating rhythm of concealment and disclosure, appearing and disappearing, truth and error, continuity and change, or to use de Man's antinomy, blindness and insight.56

Calling for a re-thinking and re-opening of texts buried in this hardened tradition, Spanos also disavows as logocentric the Derridean methodology itself:

Committed to the ontology of absence (or difference) in its critique and revision of the Western literary tradition, the Derridean deconstructors nevertheless tend to begin more or less naively with the hermeneutic methodology of presence, thus inhibiting the possibility of existential encounter with the text's temporality, blinding themselves...to its revision of being, of how it stands with being in that text.57

The new post-modern literature is "playing havoc with both the sense of an ending (i.e., linear narrative) and of symbolic form (circular narrative)," "a literature of demystification."58 Spanos' contributions to Heideggerian poetics will surely continue to dominate the current critical scene; his outstanding student Paul Bové has alerted interested scholars to a forthcoming book, Icon and Time.59
Other interesting work in Heideggerian hermeneutics is coming to light also. Some of the best essays appear in *Boundary 2* and, of course, *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature: Toward a Postmodern Literary Hermeneutics*, which originally appeared in its 1976 issue. At least half of its offerings deal with the implications for poetics and interpretation. Stanley Corngold's study of *Sein und Zeit* notes Heidegger's influence on Derrida, de Man, and others, and argues that Heidegger himself, of course, saw in poetical language "the possibilities of the disclosure reserved to mood."\(^{60}\) "In paying heed to literature as a disclosure by mood of existential possibility," he notes, "the literary theoretician proceeds in basic accord with Heidegger's project in *Sein und Zeit*."\(^{61}\) Poetry is associated with truth and mood by Heidegger, as everyone knows; poetic discourse, a primordial disposition of being prior to speech or writing, is impregnated with mood or *Befindlichkeit*, an indication of both thrownness or facticity and inchoate possibility or understanding, Corngold explains that Dasein is "delivered over" to interpretation in poetic discourse especially, because "in the way the poetic disclosure is expressed, there is already a certain opaque understanding deposited in it."\(^{62}\) Of crucial importance for the "poeticity" of literary language is its self-reflexive intention:
The character of poetic language arises from its insistence on articulating states-of-mind, that is, moods, with a view toward their fullest possible disclosure; what they disclose are "existential possibilities," read, "existence." 63

For Heidegger, Corngold emphasizes, poetical discourse is a general communication, a sharing of mind and understanding of being. Rather than issuing in an expressive way from an artist-subject, the ontological mood shares and communicates itself from the work: "poetic discourse turns on an act of communication; this act is essentially the sharing of a state-of-mind." 64 Because mood or Befindlichkeit reveals both world and possible states of being in that world to Dasein, the sharing of mood or the mood assigned to a particular "world" in poetic discourse is a special opportunity for reflection and understanding of being. Corngold explains:

The distinctiveness and primordiality of poetic discourse are based on the fact that its truth is the truth of moods as it can be communicated by a mood. To the extent that a poem is poetic it thus communicates a mood transparent to its own possibilities. These possibilities vary, of course, with the mood communicated. But at the basis of each such structure of possibilities is what Heidegger terms "Geworfenheit" (thrownness). Literature reveals through moods the dimensions of thrownness. 65

Thus the mood of being shared in the poem acquaints the reader with a particular way of thrownness, a way of being-in-the-world. In doing so, the mood imposes certain
limitations and possibilities of authentic self-
actualization inherent in the situation as articulated.
As world grounded in earth, the artwork limits and shapes
the human beings characterized in it or "delivered over"
to it:

The interpreter of literature who shares
the existence of its "characters" has the
exemplary experience of what it is to be
enraptured by a world. At the same time
he maintains an interpretative distance
from his experience. This distance permits
him to grasp the fact of his thralldom to
his own world and at the same time to re-
orient himself toward it. Literature thus
becomes the vehicle of a possible
authenticity. . . . Poetic discourse
elicits moods of various kinds, including
the mood of anxiety. "Apophantical" dis-
course, issuing into the language of
assertions, knows only the mood of
theory—the tranquillity of just tarrying
alongside the world.66

Thus, Corngold implies that poetic discourse is especially
articulated to offer different moods and different worlds
to human beings, disclosing and revealing intrinsic pro-
blematics and possibilities for existence which may be
experienced and appropriated. Perhaps the test of such
literature would be its shareable understanding and rich
variety of mood and concomitant possibility. The poem is
an opening for being to become world as mood, not represen-
tation.

Another essay in this volume, Reiner Schürmann's
"Situating Rene Char: Holderlin, Heidegger, Char and the
'There Is'," is a charming attempt to interpret some postmodern poetry in the Heideggerian mode. Like Heidegger's own poetic interpretations, Schürmann's adopts a mystical tone. For example, he states that "what is at stake in the poem is the presence of everything to everything."67 

The poem is a showing, and we should refrain from concentrating on the things shown:

When the poem is said, things are present, reconciled, called together by its speech. This recognition of their being-there is probably common to all poetry we know of. But being-there is not the being that is there. . . . The poem is the burning articulation of a desire: may all things be there. Even more, it announces and already realizes what it desires. . . . The poem is a tangible sign. . . . that mere presence is. The poem is the color of hereness, its fulgur and its splendor. The difference that the "there is" introduces into the poem is the difference between the presence and the things present or the visibility and what is rendered visible.68

Whereas Spanos and Corngold are intrigued with the prospect of Dasein analytic and ontological states of mood in literary art, Schürmann attempts to articulate the Heideggerian releasement of word and thing to one another in the poetic space of showing. All three commentators resist precipitating logocentric crystals or representations in their discourse, and refrain from talk of symbols, organic structures and determined plot lines, and "meaning." Instead, they explore the discovery that the revealing-concealing oscillation of aletheia shines forth in language;
all points of the artwork, apparent and hidden, are opportunities for free interpreting and actualizing the "text," the event-appropriating trace designed in playful thinking and saying being.

Another sensitive exploration of late Heideggerian meditation on language and textuality is Alvin Rosenfeld's "The Being of Language and the Language of Being": Heidegger and Modern Poetics," which follows Schürmann's in the same volume. Hoping to interest others in the introduction of hermeneutical thinking into literary criticism and endeavoring "to test, through practice, some of its advantages and disadvantages to the working critic," Rosenfeld is impressed with "the power of language to enact discoveries that prove to be as frail and evanescent as words themselves." Perceiving that Heidegger is especially concerned with meditating on the ground supporting the text, Rosenfeld validates the phenomenological hermeneutic as "a rich base for a new poetics," since language and being, especially human being, belong to one another in a special sense. Confirming that poetic subjectivity and expression per se is no longer crucial to the aletheia of saying being, Rosenfeld asserts:

The hermeneutical process must focus on what emerges from the darkness that precedes words and plunges back into concealment. Revealment and concealment, the two poles of phenomenological disclosure, thus become a central focus of
the critical act, which, like the poetic act itself, searches for meaning in the repetition and retrieval of originary being. Just as, in Heidegger's view, thinking is listening, so proper reading, interpreting, and understanding are parallel ways of being creatively open to what manifests itself in the poem, to both the said and the unsaid of the world as it enters and departs from language. . .what manifests itself in the poem is first and foremost language.71

Letting-be, literary language especially brings the things themselves and human being-there to light; but the shadows created alongside the lighting in the poetic space are endemic to the chiaroscuro of the truth-process. Language opens the difference between what is and its presence. Rather than manipulating words and chains of verbal signs as present-at-hand objects, we are invited to be overwhelmed and transformed, letting the uncut facets of our existence come to life and shine truthfully, playing in the light of language and the world brought forth in it:

At their fullest and most expressive, language and being are co-terminous: "the being of language" and "the language of being" coalesce. It is poetry that unites them, hallows and celebrates the union, then retreats back into the wordless, where it resides until summoned again by a new Orpheus. The moment of inspiration and insight runs its course, and both speech and the world return to their more common levels.72
Most impressive is Joseph Riddel's contribution to the volume, entitled "From Heidegger to Derrida to Chance: Doubling and (Poetic) Language." Riddel is well-read in Heidegger's primary works and in literary criticism and poetics. Unconvinced or at least unsure that Heidegger's thought can be assembled into a hermeneutic methodology, Riddel recognizes that many of the current schools of criticism and poetics have appropriated all or parts of Heidegger's insights with varying degrees of success. He calls them "translations," some of which are "misinterpretations" or "misreadings." In addition, he notes that "the appropriation of psychoanalysis by philosophy, and the centering of criticism on the problematics of language opened up by the new linguistics" is to blame for some of the confusion.

Riddel is concerned with the anxiety of Geoffrey Hartman and others who wonder in print and at colloquia whether art and literature can survive the Heideggerian "destruction" and the Derridean "deconstruction." Although at times maddeningly literal about Heidegger's language and terminology (usually the mark of a neophyte), Riddel presents a competent and thorough concentrate of Heidegger's argument in *Being and Time*, and locates Derrida's disagreement with it:

early Heideggerian separation of the authentic and inauthentic, of the primordial and the derivative, of discourse
as the structure of the Being of Dasein and "idle talk," of Verfallen as the passage from one temporality to the other, constitutes a re-appropriation of metaphysics.  

These objections, Riddel asserts, cause Derrida to charge Heidegger with entrapment in metaphysics, a lapse of nostalgia for the return of presence.

Discussing de Man's debts to Heidegger, Riddel classifies that critic as "a negative Heideggerian":

The privileging of literary language for de Man is not derived from its power of unconcealing but lies in its resistance to self-mystification, its refusal to name presence and its repeated naming of distance that is "nothing". . . . For de Man there is the "void" rather than "proximity" or the "site." The "authenticity" of literary language lies in its persistent naming of itself as "fiction," and thus of its unique double function as the origin of the "self" and the naming of the self's nothingness, the naming of the "subject" as a necessary function.

Tackling the Derridean debt to Heidegger, Riddel does not seem to doubt the sincerity behind Derrida's deconstructions of Heideggerian texts and language. He

hedges:

Heidegger presents a problem for Derrida at every turn. He has been the subject of two essays in particular, but the "name" reverberates everywhere in the Derridean canon. . . . Derrida never underplays the difficulty of reading Heidegger, nor ignores the implications of turning a methodology against itself, of deconstructing the deconstructor. One might say, then, that Derrida
underwrites Heidegger. . .to place the thinking of presence in italics, to become a signatory to the difference, to re-mark the metaphysical implications of writing an "end" to metaphysics, to submit Heidegger's valorization of speech to the mark of a proto-écriture which it tries to conceal, etc. Derrida's relentless questioning of the metaphysical hierarchy which places speech in a privileged relation to presence, and reduces writing to a secondary function, is literally an underwriting of the idea of a "poetic language," of language that claims to escape the double sense of the metaphoric.  

Riddel's intricate explanation of Derrida's commentary of Heideggerian texts privileges Derrida's "words" or simulacra:

Rather than examining a "text" for its concealed sense, or for its thematic differences which trace a hidden unity or promise a recovered word, Derrida inserts another language into the text, in order to reveal that the "text" is composed of different orders of signs and not signs which trace a single sense.

In "La Différance," we are told, Derrida deconstructs Heidegger's trace; the complementary essays "White Mythology" and "La Double Séance" are "implicitly and explicitly deconstructions of the Heideggerian principle of 'thinking' and 'saying'; the latter also "disrupts" Heidegger's idea of aletheia as truth, or for that matter any "truth" in literature. And clarifying Derrida's procedural habits, Riddel offers this helpful information:

Characteristically, Derrida's strategy is to approach one text through another,
whether the second text is a reading of the first or not. The indirection or detour is consistent within the "nature" of all textuality—that is, a text is never self-sufficient or self-present, never in itself a totalization of meaning or a concealment/unconcealment of a unitary sense.80

(One of Derrida's texts on Heidegger, "Violence and Metaphysics," is notoriously difficult to follow because it is read though Levinas' text.)

Although Riddel's announced intention is the study of Heideggerian influence in Derrida's thought, he apparently abandons Heidegger completely in the last third of the article, discussing in great detail Derrida's concern with intertextual semantic mirages and écriture. While this information is all very interesting, it also has the effect of weakening Riddel's argument, unless he believes that it is self-evident: just because Derrida has declared Heidegger to be within the metaphysical tradition does not make it so, for that would be to privilege Derrida's word. Any serious student of Heidegger can see that Riddel, though very knowledgeable and conversant in both Heidegger's texts and Derrida's "deconstructions" of them, never presents any hard evidence that Derrida's deconstructions are an improvement.

In fact, as I shall argue further on, Derrida's "deconstruction" and "freeplay," a genuine philosophical
contribution to the history of literary criticism, meets its match in Heidegger's thought, because Derrida apparently either refuses to grasp what Heidegger is saying, or he does not care, preferring to think that he can surpass the master. This hubris is unfortunate; for Derrida's thought is potentially great, though unequal to Heidegger's.

Although Frances Ferguson also addresses the problem of the intertextuality of Heidegger, Derrida, adding de Man's too in her contribution "Reading Heidegger: Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida," the whole tone of the essay is different from Riddel's. Proposing that all three attempt to "clear away" philosophical debris about the nature of "the time of language and the literary text," she discusses de Man's preference for the language of allegory because the "rhetoricity" of its own mode assumes the necessity of its own misreading; in her consideration of Derrida, however, she quotes Culler's sensible point, since echoed by others, that "communication does take place." She comments:

Culler is, of course, making a shrewd appeal to all of those who responded to Frederic Jameson's complaint that Derrida would involve us in a process of infinite regress; and he raises a viable suspicion toward the Derridean project: how is it possible to be sure that the "freeplay" which Derrida counsels is any less a blind alley that the metaphysics of presence which it was designed to counter?

Calling the opening sections of Of Grammatology "melodrama"
and "science fiction," she also shrewdly notes that Derrida's "very act of describing Heidegger's deconstruction of metaphysics enmeshes him in a welter of words which cannot be confined to a simple disclosing of a history of easily expunged bad faith." It is hard not to hear a trace of scorn in her remarks on freplay:

The passion which repeatedly institutes difference also acts to reify difference, so that the problem of trying to face the emptiness of thought continually reasserts itself as a problem. A few years ago Time magazine circulated a series of witticisms printed on little cardboard plaques, one of which said, "If you haven't got anything to say, why don't you just shut up?" The dilemma which Derrida presents us with is that he urges us to think of the emptying of thought—not having anything to say—while also reminding us of the passion which keeps leading to an unending constitution of things.

At any rate, her essay only skirts the issue of Heidegger–Derrida discourse.

Save for Gerry Stahl's intriguing application of Heideggerian Existentz to post-modern music, which is not applicable here, the last essay in applications of Heideggerian ontology is Donald Marshall's "The Ontology of the Literary Sign: Notes Toward a Heideggerian Revision of Semiology." He says that Saussure reified the sign as a thing, setting the stage for technology (in this case, linguistics) to analyze it scientifically, systematizing the properties and functioning of the sign into a branch of knowledge known as "semiology." Against this trend,
Heidegger's reflections on the sign, the existential relation of sign to signified, "profoundly radicalizes the historical thinking of philological linguistics." Contrasting Heidegger's view of the sign with that of Structuralist Jakobson and New Critic Wimsatt, Marshall reminds us that Heidegger "rejects any formalized classification of signs or of kinds or species of referring"; instead, Heidegger attempts an ontological interpretation of the sign "as a special kind of equipment for showing and indicating." The Heideggerian sign is "as-signed" or placed in a context of being: "Heidegger thereby connects the sign with the two key constituent elements: a totality within which the sign acquires its significance; and an ongoing activity within which the sign is established and used." As ready-to-hand equipment, the sign marks a conspicuous opening or place of revealing human involvement within the environment or "world." Human articulation does not empower the sign as a thing; nor does it indicate extra-linguistic things. Rather, the sign marks human "'towards-which' of serviceability and a 'for-which' of usability"; thus, Marshall maintains, the sign's "ontologically constitutive purposiveness" is evolved and situated by "a totality of involvements." Dasein orients itself toward its own being, establishing a world in which ontological signs open up the entities of that world; but the signs do not have a tangible connection
with those entities, even in an arbitrary Saussurean sense. The whole complex is the human activity of signifying, an ongoing process grasped continually through the human understanding. Neither conceptual nor systematic, human signifying is discourse, thinking being and relating to entities in an ek-static ontological manner.

Digressing from this cogent and diligent illumination of signification and discourse as explicated in Being and Time, Marshall interpolates another elaborate explanation about the nature of the artwork as described in the Heideggerian essay "The Origin of the Work of Art." Reviewing its familiar character as a working of "world" (human existence and conduct) and "earth" (material medium), Marshall emphasizes that the artwork never becomes a static representation in itself, but is always evolving shades of truth in its "intimacy of strife." Heidegger does call the artwork a "symbol"; but as Marshall makes clear throughout his explanation, this symbolizing is not a thing reified with presence: it is not an idol. Metaphor in the artwork does not carry presence either: in a metaphor, the word cancels its "normal" function and "dissolves, standing in front of something else which it manifests." But the "normal" or "proper" meaning of the word is itself only a showing of the entity within a world. Thus, for the metaphor, there is a double concealment that invokes, as Heidegger says, more rigorous thinking than
ordinary or "normal" usage. It is important to understand therefore that the metaphor is a doubled thinking-being, not a doubled presence or even a doubled absence.

As a happening of truth or active thinking of being, the artwork creates and preserves the conflict or strife between unconcealment and double concealment; but representation as copy or concept never concretizes this activity, because it is set forth and interpreted by Dasein, and as such remains working as long as Dasein evolves as involved in understanding and thinking being. As the later Heideggerian mediations on language reveal, saying as meaningful appropriation by Dasein within a world of involvements is a naming that is not just speaking, but rather is a projecting based on understanding. Marshall summarizes his studies of Heideggerian "symbol" and literary language by noting their differences; for Heidegger, poetic language has an ontological character that is neither icon nor symbol in the familiar sense:

"Poetic language" cannot be described merely as some linguistic deviation from ordinary language. . . . Poetic language can be adequately characterized only on the basis of a fully worked out analysis of human existence and "the ontologico-existential whole" of the structure of its discourse. . . .we must understand the "existential" connection of sign to signific; in other than simply causal terms. . . .the power of a sign to disclose an object rests on the articulation of human existence's understanding of its world.
Marshall points out that in his later writings on the nature of language, Heidegger distinguishes between representational "designation" versus "regioning-releasing":

Designation belongs essentially to representational thinking, which takes as assumed a framework or "transcendental horizon" within which emerge "objects" possessing an essence or "typical appearance" in relation to subjectivity . . . Instead, Heidegger proposes a "recollective thinking" characterized by a "releaseament toward things." 94

Marshall attempts a confusing, overly-abbreviated paraphrase of later Heideggerian meditations on language:

David White's book is far superior on the same subject matter. 95 However, Marshall's summary statement on Heideggerian signification is very useful:

For Heidegger, the literary sign shows forth human being's grasp of its own existence in the world. The sign is not to be understood simply as "present-at-hand" (as in Jakobson), nor even as an "object" within transcendental-horizontal, representational thinking, even when this object has the capacity to represent symbolic intuitions by analogy of metaphor. The literary sign is to be grasped neither as self-subsisting thing nor on the model of self-consciousness. . . . It will not be enough for criticism to unpack the immanent structure of the literary sign, conceived as a special variant of a functional model of communication. Nor will it be enough to explicate the systematic coherence of the poem. . . . A Heideggerian criticism will try to grasp the literary sign as constituted by showing forth what is. Such a showing is possible only for human existence within a world. That world is legitimately an object for criticism, because criticism's own signs must show forth the poem's signs as an
interpretation. Interpretation is here structural and historical, because it is a composed and steadfast abiding in the original appropriation of human nature to regioning.

In the literary sign especially we encounter the indexical foundation of language. In the index, the sign has an existential connection with what it signifies.96

In this summary, quoted here at length because it is cogent and a propos to Derrida's attacks on Heidegger's "logocentrism" that supposedly privileges Being, Marshall is careful to differentiate Heidegger's signifying from the representational metaphysics of logocentrism. As Marshall seems to grasp, Heidegger is not granting a special privilege or presence to the sign or to literary signifiers. To take Heidegger's Being, aletheia, Dasein, even "world" literally is naive or else simply suspiciously willful. Derrida's criticism of representational thinking, the cogito, logocentrics, Husserlian consciousness (to mention a few) are all valuable contributions to literary criticism and semiology; but his inclusion of Heidegger is considered suspect by more than a few Heideggerians.

As editor of this thick volume of essays, Spanos has undoubtedly inspired and encouraged Heideggerian criticism and readings. His devoted disciple Paul Bové has just published an entire volume that deconstructs modern poetry, Modernists, and New Critics, especially hapless victims
Bate and Bloom. *Destructive Poetics: Heidegger and Modern American Poetry* (1980) is an attack on the myth of autotelic texts, the stability of the self, and critical rhetorics of presence, which have all become conspicuously inadequate, exposed in their as-structure as unequal to the understanding and interpretation of post-modern poetry. Calling for a freeplay of interpretation, a re-opening of reified texts of both poetry and criticism, Bové denigrates traditional aesthetic disinterestedness and distance as callous. Opting for "the potential for violence and novelty in every act of reading or interpretation,"97 he asserts that modern poetry self-consciously obliterates "the language, forms, tropes, and poems" of the sacred tradition revered by the Modernists; indeed, "all particular 'traditions' are historical, ideological fictions, i.e., unacknowledged myths, the creations of mystified minds."98 Charging both New Criticism and its foes with Gnosticism, Bové assails those critics who reify the poem into an artifact of civilization and culture, thereby "establishing the priority of word over world, presence over absence."99 He is especially merciless with W. J. Bate and Harold Bloom, who are arraigned for the crimes of fostering in their criticism "presence," "absolute beginnings and ends," "mystification," "the entire logos-centric and onto-theological 'tradition,'" and using language that is "used-up, reified, habitualized by the
nostalgic metaphysical 'tradition'." 100

To replace the débris, Bové proposes "demystified literary history" and a hermeneutics "marked by an awareness that all genuine uses of language are destructive." 101 He champions the alternative "intertextuality" in place of the essentialist tradition of classification and structured order, and attacks any suggestion that either self or text is centered. Citing Heidegger's Being and Time throughout the book to support his destructive hermeneutical methodology, Bové encourages a poetry to "reopen the site of the past, to examine the historical sedimentation and to make possible discoveries." 102 With the possible exception of de Man, all recent theories of literary history for the past forty years—whether New Critical, Bloomian-genetic, mythic, or structuralist—are inauthentic, dominated by a particular trope or matrix-center of interpretation, a standard, Bové asserts. Critics and interpreters of literature have been treating the texts as objects; literary history has been forced into a series of atemporal incarnate molds.

Only Paul de Man has achieved some insight into the promise and possibilities of Heideggerian premises and methodology, Bové admits. In fact, he acknowledges that de Man has influenced his own approach "until the point where I depart from de Man by deconstructing his own blind
claim for an absolutely demystified literary or poetic language." Agreeing with de Man that literature is "inherently based on a difference: the act and the 'interpretation' of that act which remains always only mediate," and that literature and literary history have "two foci," the text and the ongoing misreading of it, Bové parts company with him over the hermeneutical relationship:

This process of interpretation is reciprocal: the later text does not merely open up the earlier and make it say what it did not mean to say, but the earlier text in turn opens up the later so that interpretation and literary history become integral, but not identical parts of the process of literary understanding. . . . Interpretation and literary history are reduced by de Man to the process of unending "correction" of critical misreadings of major texts which leaves the actual relationship among poems in doubt."

De Man is also guilty of what Bové terms "an unexamined presupposition"; he's blind to "the complexities of literary language." Arguing that Heidegger's Dasein of Being and Time is the dis-coverer of truth, the truth-process of aithēia Bove clarifies Dasein's penchant for idle talk, a reified articulation or judgment based on the theory of truth as correspondence:

In other words, by arguing that there is no truth independently of Dasein, since Dasein alone discloses, the essence of truth is "adulterated" by the facticity and fallenness, the finitude, of Dasein's being-in-the-world. Error and truth are
equally existential possibilities of Dasein as special instances of the in-authentic and authentic modes of Being. Thus, Dasein must wrest from the hiddenness of untruth the possibility of disclosedness which it also contains.106

Truth and untruth are concomitant states of human discourse: authentic use of language as disclosure is repeated as assertion or statement, becoming present-at-hand logos, the inauthentic familiar truism or cliché of Heidegger's They (Das Man). Because "idle talk" is preserved as idol, it covers over truth, promoting untruth until the violence of understanding re-issues disclosure authentically. Reifying discourse into object or instrument of truth, idle talk promotes a correspondence theory of truth as mimesis and representation, the traditional shibboleth of Western metaphysics. Bové calls for a violent speech, a hermeneutics "which brings out the nothingness and Being which the tradition covers up"; the atemporal autotelic theories of texts and literary history "must be met as the temporal event of a human's understanding disclosure."107 Comparing this failure of the critical tradition to the discussion in Being and Time of the broken hammer, the failed tool whose ontological important and as-structure is suddenly manifest, Bové contends that the tradition in crisis is like a broken tool that can no longer be taken for granted in its functional capacity: Dasein is invited to interpret, disclose, and understand anew the whole and
the part, their differences and their conjunction. In doing so, Bove explicitly reminds us of the Heideggerian forestructure and the hermeneutic circle:

Since understanding can only emerge as a result of this failure of tradition, destructive interpretation is always circular and shares in the basic structure of the existential-ontological understanding of Dasein.108

Although he does owe a substantial debt to de Man, Bove makes two very original and interesting contributions to Heideggerian readings in criticism. Maintaining that "earlier" texts and "later" texts can open up one another in a reciprocal relationship, Bove suggests that poets and critics can "reclaim for human possibility those potential problems and issues which are lost in the systematization of Dasein's disclosures in past language."109 This refreshing idea could rescue many literary artworks closed as "explained" by explication de texte, historical allusion or organic structuring. Considered either as an articulation of Derridean freplay or as Heideggerian hope, this idea is provocative and promising: criticism could benefit greatly from such an attitude, should it be appropriated in the proper academic quarters.

Related to this intriguing suggestion is another of Bove's original insights; he finds a Derridean-Heideggerian intertextuality in Derrida's difference and Heidegger's Nothingness:
When Derrida "defines" la différence as the ground of all conceptualization, as the possibility of thought and discovery, he certainly alludes to Heidegger's demonstration that at the origin, the fundamental center, there is only Nothing, the withdrawal of Being which marks the ontological difference between Being and beings. 110

Heidegger's Nothingness is surely as enigmatic as the Derridean trace/difference that makes language and thought sayable and thinkable. Bové is, of course, on eminently safe ground here; Derrida makes an uncharacteristically charitable allusion to Heidegger at the end of the difference essay in Speech and Phenomena, an oft-quoted allusion widely noted.

Bové's own final position or belief on literary history and interpretation is deduced from Heideggerean aletheia. "Authentic" literary criticism or interpretation is that which manifests the understanding of perpetual destruction on the verge of the abyss or Nothingness, the constant oscillating-shifting between truth and error that is the state of human discourse. This state of affairs is not a kind of phenomenal flux or absurd history; rather, it is dis-closure and dis-covery that accounts for the metaphoricy of language intimately intertwined with human interpreting and being-there-in-the-world. The second half of his book is an intriguing examination of post-modern poetry using examples from the poetry of Whitman, Stevens, and Olson. These poets, Bové illustrates, seem
to have been especially cognizant of the destructive
operatives in human discourse; their poetry escapes
Modernist, New Critical, and structuralist atemporal
spatializing and reifying. Remaining open to the tempo-
rality of human experience, post-modern poets such as
these offer a renewed understanding of human temporality
and existence.

In *The Inverted Bell: Modernism and the Counter-
poetics of William Carlos Williams*, Joseph Riddel would
appear to agree with Bové that post-modern self-reflexive
poetry escapes and refutes the ontotheological tradition of
Modernism and New Criticism. Probing Williams' poetics,
Riddel employs Heideggerian language, specifically the
heuristic model of the hermeneutic circle, to describe the
civil war at work in the poem:

Like Heidegger's ideal poet, Williams
writes a basically contradictory poem.
Rejecting the priority of ideas over
things, he nevertheless writes a poetry
of homelessness, of the problematic
distance between the two. He writes,
that is, a poetry about poetry, a poem
of history and thus of lost origins.
His poetics is inseparable from his
poems, and his discursive utterances
on poetics need the same kind of
exegesis visited on his poetry. Poems
become commentaries on other poems,
and on the whole. The canon rever-
berates. Text becomes pre-text for sub-
sequent text, generating a hermeneutical
circle that will not close.111

In fact, Riddel finds what he calls the "myth of the her-
meneutical circle" in Homer:
The Homeric theme... becomes the theme of scattering and gathering, of homelessness and wandering, of desire and curiosity, of the razing of the city (and hence the idea of the ground) and the search for a new ground or home, the original starting point and original marriage.  

Suggesting that Williams attempts to recapture the facticity of things-in-language, Riddel proceeds to argue that Williams' post-modern self-conscious awareness discovers the relation between word and thing. To re-view the word's being as a relation itself in which the thing brings itself forth and holds its relation is the poet's task. Refusing any absolute ground or authority, the poet experiments in the labyrinth. Because man has no divine referent, human language is free of signified or referents:

Detail calls attention primarily to itself and to its immediate position in relation to other detail, rather than pointing beyond itself and thus declaring its own absence. The authority of the detail asserts itself, proclaiming itself as antipoetic because it does not refer back to an essence or idea which lends it significance and defines it as a shadow. Williams' world flattens out into a chaos of present things and relations. Historical detail, as in Paterson, is wrenched out of the historical perspective which lent it meaning.

Riddel sees a questioning of old measures and "fictions of the center"; Williams' post-modernism is typically dissonant. Because Paterson does not evince a central voice or controlling image, Riddel senses in its resultant cacophony a
lack of *logos* or statement, a democratic atomism of its
details and elements:

The thing as it is, however, is the thing
where it is, defined in its plane by the
set of relations. In its field, the
thing defines itself reciprocally. There
is no point of departure. . . . Interpre-
tation may proceed from any of a manifold
of things or points. The relationships
may be read in several directions. Any
one interpretation simultaneously asserts
its pertinence and brings itself into
question. . . . Nor does the detail
gather to a focus around a central "I"
which in interpreting the detail makes the
detail phenomenologically incarnate that
"I." If a controlling subject or center
(a central imagination) is not operating
in the poem, however, a system of measuring
and relating is there. And the system
appears, or is discovered, in the pro-
gressive unwinding of the logically unre-
lated events.114

Riddle does find a structurality of structure in *Paterson*;
but it is "deliberately concealed" and "suppressed or frag-
mented."115 Contending that the ground of the poem is the
Derridean "jeu," that the poem itself is a renewal of a
shifting ground of restless energy in a woven tissue of
sorts, Riddle describes *Paterson* as "a kind of palimpsest
or helix":

The interpretations radiate from the
detail, but come to rest at no point.
If one follows the clues from point to
point he does not arrive at a place
outside the poem. He comes to the
recognition of design, of the poem as a
text interwoven with a number of pre-
vious texts, themselves interpenetrating
with pre-texts. What the interpreter
experiences is the experience of inter-
pretation itself, the experience of
words as relations which is the poet's experience. At the bottom one uncovers not a meaning, but an elemental design which can be described in terms of a number of mythic patterns, that is, only in terms of other metaphors.116

Thus, even the typography becomes a topography of script and margins; the poem is a playful place for language and being-there. Offering a showcase for exceptional, even bizarre transformations, substitutions, revisions, the poetic clearing attenuates the notion of centered organicity; instead, the poem is a clear white space, a battlefield, new ground that is groundless substitution and revelatory rearrangement. Smashing the representational and organic atoms of discourse, Riddle refuses to believe in the privilege of any one detail or particle in the differential field. The material words are divested of their Aristotelian temporal modality by his gesture: no longer "nows" of a fluid medium, time and its concomitant being must be re-thought, re-newed, re-measured. Because the poetic space is measuring things and human being-there, a field for the play of language, a Heideggerian "house of Being," the poet lights up relations and relativities.

Dwelling and measuring in language, the poet opens a space where humans re-mark and measure the familiar against the unfamiliar unknown, that which is covered-over, the gods and Saying. Setting familiar earth against unfamiliar regioning in the sky, the poet uncovers and challenges the
autochthonic rootedness of human being (Dasein) to move freely in the space between earth and sky while exulting in their differences: humans set and develop the horizons, not by will-to-power manipulations of things and others in the world, but rather by letting them be and be said. Instead of celebrating a great Chain of Being reified into hierarchies of presence and representation, poets let existence be, content to articulate the ongoing temporal process of aletheia or truth-showing that is not progress or simple flux. Echoing Heidegger, Riddel suggests that the poet "places himself at the point of e-mergence, of disclosure, of the coming to light of being."\textsuperscript{117} Searching for new ground, restless and resistant to paleonastics and all concealments, absenting himself from familiar measurements and relations, the poet wanders in the field of said and unsaid articulations.

Moving freely from the discourse of Heidegger to that of Lacan, Riddel designates the poet as "phallus"; seeing a pun in Williams' title \textit{Paterson}, Riddel discusses its implications:

The son...is the emerging word, coming to replace the father, to bring into question the rigid law and received grammar of the father's world. He represents, therefore, the sacrifice of the father; he displaces the fiction of original unity; like the namesake of the wanderer, the son lives his own separation.\textsuperscript{118}
The absent father, "a center never completely graspable, an origin that is, in itself, unspeakable," is a tyrant, the "experience or history and its symbolic authority." However, for the poet himself, metaphoric language or its use is only an approximation, a substitute for lost origins and the absence of the father; "no amount of experience can reveal the Word behind the word." Nothingness, no origin, is lost among the words in the field; our desires generate palimpsests of metonomy, not true presences crystallized in metaphor. The tag-ends of endless beginnings, fragments of articulated desire, suggest the shapings of being-in-the-world and restless aletheia. Closures, especially books, entomb and reify the cries of desire; centers in articulated closures cover-over or blight the work's worlding and working.

Faithful to Heidegger's ek-static temporality in his speculations on poetic freeplay, Riddle links the temporality in poetry to temporality in history, attacking the problematics of history and mimesis in Paterson:

Williams' substitution of literature for history moves us beyond mimetic theories of literature to the problematic of a structural view of literature, which claims that literature like myth can take us into the immediacy of time. In this view, poetry makes us stand in the presence of the original event, the event of rupture or catastrophe, in which a structure or field of 'history' is generated by leaving its origin behind. Only in this moment of catastrophe...
can man stand in the openness of his freedom. 121

Arguing that Paterson is an attack on logocentrics and metaphysics, thus bolstering the imaginative re-opening of consensus on the poet's task, he asserts: "It is a time of accumulated meanings which have led to blockage and from which man demands relief." 122

Emphasizing that in-difference has resulted in the care-less indifference of technological manipulation of language, Riddel celebrates the violence of hermeneutical discourse and poetry that seeks to question systems, presences, centers: Williams' Paterson is, of course, one of these. Such writing has re-opened and de-mystified logocentrics:

The history of recent Modernism is the history of metapoetics, of a self-reflexive poetry which puts itself constantly in question as the only way of resisting the problematic of language. But in this very self-conscious, self-critical act, it throws itself beyond Modernism, beyond the fiction of recovered innocence, and into the freedom of a truly deconstructive adventure. 123

Echoing Baudelaire, Coleridge, and Plato, Riddel re-introduces the inter-relatedness of poetry and madness:

Writing... becomes a kind of drunkenness or madness, a calculated vulgarity. It brings the old 'virtue' or logocentrism into question, catching in its violent reversals the simultaneous destruction-creation or end-beginning that all dreams or myths at once express and conceal, that every text harbors like a secret or stain. 124
This sense of drunkenness or madness might be connected to the radical re-definitions of temporality in the new writing: "The 'field' is generated by the process of breaking down the old, sclerotic time structures, which conceal and deny the presence of the elemental." Postulating that the sweeping changes in thinking about time may be profitably linked to developments in theoretical physics, Riddel alleges (somewhat inaccurately, to anyone who knows her physics) that Newton's world and time have been replaced and re-written by Einstein's, whose new constant, the speed of light, has monumentally de-centered existence and time in the universe. Reverting briefly to Lacanian terminology, he comments, "the son's new speech is a supplement inaugurating a new game." This new game framework puts extra-stressful conditions on writing:

Old meanings are deflected against one another as the only means at hand for releasing the elemental energy of language. But that energy is not necessarily a continuing presence, that idea of creative force that all literature seems to celebrate. It is the freeplay of the game, the instability at the center of all life. . . . The poem is like a "cyclotron," conservative when it is most dynamic and destructive.

Rephrasing Genesis, Riddel proposes that the incarnate word is being re-written: "In the beginning was the game, not a lost origin but the freeplay of interpretation. Interpretation becomes the immediate ground, because there is no ground."
Reviewing Riddel's book in *Diacritics*, J. Hillis Miller remarks on its "constant triangulation from Heidegger and Derrida." In addition, he locates Riddel's "chief topic" and "thematic focus" in "the problematics of origins and beginnings in poetry." Immediately questioning Riddel's readings of Heidegger, Derrida, and Williams, Miller expresses strong doubts that cursory or fragmentary readings and translations are adequate: aware of the problematical intertextuality in the writings and thought of Heidegger and Derrida, Miller has misgivings about Riddel's "triangulation" methodology and assumptions:

A long dialogue with Heidegger, even a somewhat subterranean battle with Heidegger, is one of the threads winding its way through Derrida's essays. An understanding of Derrida... cannot be separated from the question of Derrida's reading of Heidegger. "Sometimes [I] have the feeling" says Derrida, "that the Heidegger problematic is the 'deepest' and most 'powerful' defense of what I am attempting to call into question under the heading of thought of presence." [Positions, p. 75] Is Derrida's understanding of Heidegger correct? Derrida, as a matter of fact, in an important footnote to "Ousia et Gramme," puts his whole reading of Heidegger under the aegis of this problem of translation.

Pinpointing the difficulty in Riddel's "triangulation" approach, especially his juxtaposition of Heideggerian and Derridean thought as a cohesive "philosophy," Miller lists at least two reasons for disagreement: "the 'other writers'
must themselves be fully worked through"; and reading all of Heidegger and Derrida "might take a lifetime," a good point.

Unwilling to accept Riddel's reading, he paints his colleague's own critical practice as an oscillation that is ultimately vacillation:

The point is that the two formulations cannot by any means be reconciled. Riddel appears to assume that they can, and so his interpretative language wanders continually back and forth between them. Heidegger, on the whole, wins the day.\textsuperscript{133}

Castigating Riddel for failing to notice Derrida's attack on Heidegger's metaphysical nostalgia for the master word, Miller abruptly shifts his ground to praise:

I began by saying that Riddel's project is of great importance and that The Inverted Bell could be exemplary for many similar studies. There are genuine insights which put him closer to what is at stake in Williams work.\textsuperscript{134}

Although he credits Riddel with "intermittent insight into the difference between Heidegger and Derrida," Miller simultaneously berates him for lapses into the very metaphysical notions of organicity and periodization of literary history.\textsuperscript{135} Accepting "at face value Heideggerian formulas about aletheia" is a fault Miller finds in Riddel's "literal or mimetic" appropriations.\textsuperscript{136} This train of thought leads Miller into a startling conclusion:

The violence of literature is, however, in fact all in the words. It leaves
things just as they were, with everything changed and yet nothing changed by a single word.\textsuperscript{137}

For that is Riddel's (and Heidegger's) very point.

Language assists in bringing things forth in the world and relating them, holding them in the relation. Probably even Derrida would agree that language substitutions do not change the things themselves; the things are there, calling to Dasein to re-name, re-think, re-interpret. The task of being is literally and linguistically endless.

Devoting the last pages of the review to a somewhat harsh lecture on Riddel's alleged failure to recognize the heterogeneity of texts, their intertextuality, Miller maintains that Riddel has failed in his attempt to write a deconstructive poetics. Miller offers his own version:

The clearer deconstructors are those which are most sensitive to the complexities of figure, to that range of different figures which current rhetoric is recovering as a tool of literary analysis: metonymy, synecdoche, metalepsis, catachresis, and so on. Attention to the play of figure in a literary or philosophical text is necessary not because figurative language provides an easy transition from the reference of "literal language" to the "freeplay of fiction." Figure is the essential means of mimesis, for example in the assertions of substantial identity or analogy by way of metaphor. Attention to the play of figure is necessary rather because the heterogeneity of any text expresses itself in the fluctuations of figure. Figure is the battleground between reference and the deconstruction of reference. An example
is a figure which functions simultaneously as a metaphor, therefore as mimesis, and as metonymy, therefore as the assertion of a discontinuity which destroys mimesis. 138

Replying in the next issue of *Diacritics*, Riddle recognizes that Miller's chief concern is his deconstructive methodology in *The Inverted Bell*, not his insights into Williams' poetics. Claiming that he had not intended to undertake a Heideggerian reading of Williams' poetry, Riddle asserts that his intent was to argue that Williams empties rhetorical figures of full presencing; he did not try to do either Heideggerian or Derridean "readings" that would rapidly become "misreadings." 139 Riddle recognizes that all texts are heterogeneous, irreducible to any transcendental:

I also assumed a fundamental difference between those texts I called "Modern" which are heterogeneous and try to repress their double nature, and those I called "post-Modern" which not only recognize their irreducible doubleness but seek to expose the figural bottom of "Modernist" texts, to invert those texts. 140

Admitting that Miller's essays on Williams inspired his own thinking, Riddle comments:

Miller discovers in Williams *Spring and All* a text which is at the same time mimetic and anti-minetic, and thus a work entrapped in the very web of privileged metaphors it attacks. Williams is a poet both of mimesis and aletheia, Miller argues, a poet who both repeats classical poetics (represents presence) and enacts presencing . . . . Yet, this proof that no poet
can escape the "tradition" that poetry can never "progress," ends by valorizing poetry, as the exemplary form of deconstruction, a kind of conservative element which "destroys and creates at once."141

Riddel charges that Miller "interprets Derrida's interpretation of écriture as a bottom, as a privileged concept behind which there is nothing."142 Differentiating himself from this interpretation of Derridean discourse, Riddel protests:

I am paraphrasing the structure of a desire that marks the present lack, the bottomlessness of knowledge. . . . I (literally) indicate that the "origin" is already a reconstruction (a re-membering) of traces (already double signs) which only ambiguously signify. 143

Vehemently denying that he ever envisions an "originary pre-linguistic event," Riddel also terms Miller a "Geneva School dropout"144 reading The Inverted Bell as a quest for Williams' total intentionality.

Preferring de Man's brand of post-structuralism, Riddel praises de Man's work as "the best representation of Derrida's thought in American Criticism and the most sophisticated, complex, and resourceful containment of the full thrust of the Derridean question."145 Approving of de Man's "intricate dialectical counter-maneuver," in which de Man postulates that literary language alone is self-consciously aware of the eternal gap between signifier and signified, Riddel elaborates:
De Man therefore inverts the priority of fiction to myth, making myth something like the idealization or totalization to which a self-conscious language is immune. Fiction for de Man repeatedly asserts its separation from the empirical, and repeatedly names the "void" between consciousness and any grounding of it. Consciousness is then the "presence of a nothingness" and "literature" is the "persistent naming" of this absence. Fiction, not myth, is the ground of all we call "culture" and fiction is always already doubled and knows its doubleness. It is not the crisis, but always names the crisis. All of de Man's subsequent privileged terms for literary language—irony, allegory, temporality and narrative—follow from this discovery.\textsuperscript{145}

Returning to aspects of Miller's review, Riddel denies that post-Modernism is a kind of naming of the origin or privileging of any primordial moment; it is not a "neo-primitivism."\textsuperscript{146} Instead, he charges that Miller's own readings of Derridean thought are misreadings; fearful of implicit nihilism in freeplay and decentered discourse, Miller "ironizes Derrida" and "turns him into a philosopher."\textsuperscript{147} Using Miller's recent article on Middlemarch, in which Miller argues that the novel can be read as a "deconstruction" of history, Riddel attacks his methodology and assumptions:

He does not follow his own advice to conduct a rhetorical analysis of the novel, but offers us a thematic reading of the novel's systematic displacement of all referentiality. His reading follows the pattern of explaining several layers of a thematic web, but by refusing to dialecticize the themes, he sees the novel
not as an organic unity mirroring a teleological history, but as an under-
cutting of all ideas of order except its own interpretation. Thus the
"self-defeating turning back of the novel to undermine its own ground"
arrives at the ground of a kind of writing which is a constitutive fiction,
a breaking up of one dream of history which makes necessary the reweaving of
it. . . . For Miller, as for de Man, Western literature has always provided
this ground, and always already undermined itself. We really don't need any
more texts. We have only to re-write our old essays, pulling out of the
deceptions of metaphysics in which it is entrapped, but that literature literally authored the metaphysical.

Whatever their minor differences, post-metaphysical phenomenologists have in common their concern with the process of aesthetic interpretation and the logistics of reading. This preoccupation is not a sudden rush of narcissism on their part: critics familiar with the Heideggerian project express legitimate concern with the nature of temporality and ontological mood in the artwork. In addition, the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle is becoming a favorite paradigm for probing its identity as fore-
structure for subsequent multiple interpretations and understanding. All of these attempts at Heideggerian readings are fruitful, meaningful, and timely: it is a good beginning.

But even more of Heidegger's project is applicable to post-modern literary discussions of the nature, identity and temporality of the literary text. Perhaps Spanos' Icon
and Time will delve deeper into matters given only cursory attention so far. I agree with de Man, Spanos, Bové, and Riddel that the artwork can no longer be considered a closed, spatial, organic object insulated from the temporality of language and being. As text, literary art is a field of signs thrown by a Dasein to other Daseins. As forestructure, its language evokes a certain ontological mood or openness toward existence; this mood (Befindlichkeit) is sharable within the worlds of other Daseins of the same time or future time. Until Heideggerian critics began to question the metaphysics of presence, artist-subject and work-object were discussed as present Other; the privileged details, images, structures, of the work were reified into a truth-product easily consumed by the mass "They" of educated and cultured human beings, who quantified this truth-product as a species of "knowledge" and mastery. Aligning the words or signs of the artistic construct with Aristotelian "nows," or time as movement, the measurement of motion and change, metaphysicians created the illusion of presence of the text and truth-reality in the text by conflating time and space. The linear act of reading toward a telos in which the whole truth was ultimately mapped out and spatialized privileged space over time, rather than keeping them balanced and interrelated.
The text should be considered, then, as an openness or ontological mood, a forestructuring of signs thrown for the purpose of communicable shareable understanding with other Daseins. The text itself is thrown-project: given certain words that sign the things coming into themselves and being held in relation to themselves and one another in that world of the text as thrown, certain possibilities and openness for self-actualization are made available to the characters in the text and to the Daseins invited to share the ontological mood of that world working. Thus, the identity of the text is its manner of thrownness and the nascent possibilities in that facticity; but this identity is not a spatialization or ordered structure. Rather, it accounts for the gap between art and reality, what de Man calls allegory of art. The word-signs are not stable entities connected to signifieds, and the text is not an object reified, spatialized, and given a final structure and truth-label or "meaning" that supports a certain truth about being or unchanging essence. The identity of the text changes, being modified by every reading and interpretation: reader-Daseins bring their own horizons and being-in-the-world and temporality to mesh with the horizons of the world working in the work, set in the earth. This interplay of horizons has the effect of opening both textual identity and reader-Dasein's identity: their differences open up to one another within the shareable
mood. If the reader-Dasein is willing and eager to remain open to the abyss, the groundlessness or nothingness of authenticity, she will tolerate the ambiguity, the discomfort, the anxiety of suspending the will-to-truth as present and produced in herself, the work at hand, or any other text. Vulnerable to the horizons opened up by the text and all subsequent critical emendations of the identity of the text, her own being-in-the world and self-actualization is enriched. To fall into the They, to accept a certain reading or certain fixed identity without admitting differences or the play of such differences, is a surrender into insulated, inauthentic existence.

Remaining open, painstakingly and patiently cognizant of the ekstases of her own being, the reader-critic can enter within the temporality of the worlding of the work, experiencing its working without expectations or telos. Rather than existing within the They, reading the work in an idle or merely curious, detached, disinterested fashion, she can dwell on groundlessness in the swirl of truth and untruth, experiencing both and resting on Nothing. Letting-be, she is.

In the next chapter, I would like to examine a text as forestructure, Befindlichkeit, and temporal being, a field of signs thrown by Milton, who is usually considered well within the fold of metaphysics and onto-theology. I
would like to re-open Milton's *Paradise Regained*, liberating its temporality from spatialized critical interpretations. Although these interpretations and understandings are part of its "identity," they are not its final "truth." Examining these critical texts, observing their privileging of certain details, images, or "nows" in the poem, their reifying and affixing of certain meanings and truth-values, the post-modern Heideggerian critic can dis-cover and un-cover facets of the poem, possibilities neglected and overlooked. To accept as solid, presenced "truth" the critical opinions of others is to accept uncritically the existence of the They, that impersonal and inauthentic self. Reading on the edge of the abyss, refusing any absolute ground beneath, the reader-Dasein can enter the labyrinth, ignoring the deceptions of the rational order and regulated time. De-mystifying, de-troping, and breaking the graven images or idols, assigned to ourselves, we can enter the event-appropriating poetic space for measuring our being in the chiaroscuro of truth and untruth. Such a project is a kind of madness, but madness is also a matter of interpretation.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I


3 Biographia Literaria, in Adams, p. 468.

4 Biographia Literaria, in Adams, p. 469.

5 Biographia Literaria, in Adams, p. 471.

6 Biographia Literaria, in Adams, p. 471.

7 Sartor Resartus, in Adams, p. 533.

8 Sartor Resartus, in Adams, p. 533.

9 The Poet, in Adams, pp. 547, 548, 549.


15 Lentricchia, pp. 15-16.

17. Lentricchia, p. 5.


22. Blindness and Insight, p. 11.


26. Blindness and Insight, p. 32.

27. Blindness and Insight, p. 40.


29. Blindness and Insight, p. 111.


33 "Spatialization of Time," p. 91.

34 "Spatialization of Time," p. 93.

35 "Spatialization of Time," p. 98.

36 "Spatialization of Time," p. 100.


40 Being and Time, p. 193.


48 "Introduction," Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. xi-xii. Hereafter cited as Spanos,
"Introduction": MH and the Question of Literature.


51 "Breaking the Circle: Hermeneutics as Dis-
 cited as "Breaking the Circle."

52 "Breaking the Circle," p. 424.


54 "Breaking the Circle," p. 428.


57 "Breaking the Circle," p. 447.

58 "Breaking the Circle," p. 448.

59 Paul Bové, Destructive Poetics: Heidegger and
Modern American Poetry (New York: Columbia University
Press, 1980), p. 72; "Recently, an attempt has been made
to ground a temporal literary hermeneutics upon Being and
Time. In his forthcoming Icon and Time, William V.
Spanos argues for a return to the primordial sources of
literature and reading by a process of understanding based
upon the temporal disclosure of discourse." Hereafter
cited as Bové, DP.

60 "Sein und Zeit: Implications for Poetics," in MH
and the Question of Literature, pp. 99, 101. Hereafter
cited as Corngold, "Implications for Poetics."

61 Corngold, "Implications for Poetics," p. 102.


63 Corngold, "Implications for Poetics," p. 107.
64 Corngold, "Implications for Poetics," p. 110.

65 Corngold, "Implications for Poetics," p. 111.

66 Corngold, "Implications for Poetics," pp. 111-112.


69 Alvin Rosenfeld, "'The Being of Language and the Language of Being': Heidegger and Modern Poetics," in MH and the Question of Literature, pp. 196, 197. Hereafter cited as Rosenfeld, "The Being of Language."

70 Rosenfeld, "The Being of Language," p. 199.


75 Riddel, "From Heidegger to Derrida," p. 236.

76 Riddel, "From Heidegger to Derrida," p. 239.

77 Riddel, "From Heidegger to Derrida," p. 245.

78 Riddel, "From Heidegger to Derrida," p. 246.


82. Ferguson, "Reading Heidegger," p. 264.


84. Ferguson, "Reading Heidegger," p. 265.

85. Ferguson, "Reading Heidegger," p. 266.


99 Bove, DP, p. xi.
100 Bove, DP, p. xii.
101 Bove, DP, p. xiii.
102 Bove, DP, p. xiv.
103 Bove, DP, p. 33.
104 Bove, DP, p. 48.
105 Bové, DP, p. 32.
106 Bové, DP, p. 56.
107 Bové, DP, p. 62.
108 Bové, DP, p. 65.
109 Bové, DP, p. 87.
110 Bové, DP, p. 91.


112 The Inverted Bell, p. 7.
113 The Inverted Bell, p. 13.
114 The Inverted Bell, pp. 18-19.
115 The Inverted Bell, p. 19.
116 The Inverted Bell, p. 21.
117 The Inverted Bell, p. 59.
118 *The Inverted Bell*, pp. 88; 90-91.

119 *The Inverted Bell*, pp. 88; 89.

120 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 108.

121 *The Inverted Bell*, pp. 206-207.

122 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 209.

123 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 226.

124 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 229.

125 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 234.

126 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 247.

127 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 248.

128 *The Inverted Bell*, p. 251.


133 "Deconstructors," p. 28.

134 "Deconstructors," p. 29.

135 "Deconstructors," p. 29.

136 "Deconstructors," p. 29.

137 "Deconstructors," p. 29.
"Deconstructors," p. 31.


Chapter 2

POST-MODERN PHENOMENOLOGICAL POETICS:
HEIDEGGER AND DERRIDA

Heidegger's Being and the Showing of Language

Questioning, interpreting, and showing being through and in language is the phenomenological quest; the momentum for emergence, the opening up of horizons and possibilities of being lies in the oscillating of the essent as it resists the extreme possibility of non-being. According to Heidegger, this questioning and oscillating is the very ground of authenticity; but the "ground" is thus an abyss, a dwelling on the edge of nothingness. Warning that the opportunities for authenticity are under attack and endangered by "demonic" forces, Heidegger has chronicled a "darkening" of the world that can be prevented only when humans will heed the call to re-open the questioning process, rousing themselves from the tranquillity and lethargy of detached and spiritless existence:

The essential episodes of this darkening are: the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the standardization of man, the pre-eminence of the mediocre... Darkening of the world means emasculation of the spirit, the
disintegration, wasting away, repression, and misinterpretation of the spirit. . . .
The lives of men begin to slide into a world which lacked that depth from out of which the essential always comes to man and comes back to man, so compelling him to become superior and making act in conformity to a rank. All things sank to the same level, a surface resembling a blind mirror that no longer reflects, that casts nothing back. The prevailing dimension became that of extension and number. . . a boundless et cetera of indifference and always-the-sameness. . . an active onslaught that destroys all rank and every world-creating impulse of the spirit, and calls it a lie.  

Charging that technology, metaphysical thinking, and misuse of language are demonic components, Heidegger proposes to revivify physis and being through re-appropriated language: "Because the destiny of language is grounded in a nation's relation to being, the question of being will involve us deeply in the question of language."  

In such use of language is "the overpowering presence that is not mastered," accomplished as world set in earth with a special sort of permanence or idea:

The Greeks viewed language as something essential, hence in line with their understanding of being. Essent is that which is permanent and represents itself as such, that which appears and manifests itself primarily to vision. In a certain broad sense the Greeks looked on language from a visual point of view, that is, starting from the written language. It is in writing that the spoken language comes to stand. . . . But through the flow of speech language seeps away into the impermanent. 

Signifiers are not real in themselves; rather, the words
are ontological equipment, so that "what is named in the word is not invoked as really present but represented as only potentially in being." Furthermore, when subjected to grammatical and etymological investigation, the signifier "being" itself as a word shows an effacement, "a name for something indeterminate," and "a compromise and mixture of three different radical meanings," so that "the word 'being' is empty and its meaning a vapor." Effacement affects every word or signifier, so that they are "worn-out, though still filled with meaning." Derrida seems to be making a similar point in his essay "White Mythology," concerning the metaphoricity of language.

Writing being, the literary Dasein discloses the emergent power of physis and logos gathering in the flashing of aletheia, Heideggerian truth, in the artwork. This logos or statement is typically the gathering of unrest and conflict, the oscillation of the essent in and between being and non-being on the path of appearances. Literary Dasein highlights the bond of this polemos, and "by uniting the opposites maintains the full sharpness of their tension." Wisdom is the "truth" captured by the artist-writer in tune with this ontological rhythm:

The sapient man sails into the very middle of the dominant order; he tears it open and violently carries being into the essent; yet he can never
master the overpowering. Hence he is tossed back and forth between structure and the structureless, order and mischief, between the evil and the noble. Every violent curbing of the powerful is either victory or defeat. Both, each in its different way, unfold the dangerousness of achieved or lost being. Both, in different ways, are menaced by disaster. The violent one, the creative human, who sets forth into the unsaid, who breaks into the un-thought, compels the unhappened to happen and makes the unseen appear—this violent one stands at all times in venture. In venturing to master being, he must risk the assault of the non-essential, he must risk dispersion, in-stability, disorder, mischief.9

Language is strange and terrible because it is human and always bodies forth the awful conflict of being and non-being, taking up a different stance depending on the world brought forth: "Language is the primordial poetry in which a people speaks being."10 But authentic language is always pulled down by a sort of gravitational force and effacement due to common usage, becoming mere sign or "talk"; the transparent and bloodless discourse familiar in everyday use that nevertheless contains bits of fossil metaphor.

Expanding and developing his post-modern poetics in his Poetry, Language, and Thought and On the Way to Language, Heidegger attempts to explore the phenomenological character of art, its existential import and ontological motives. In one seminal essay, "The Origin of the Work of
Art," he challenges the metaphysical stance of objective art studied in terms of form and matter, preferring to speak again of the violence, conflict, "disclosure of being," and "happening of truth" amid the polemos or struggle of earth and world:

The art work opens up in its way the Being of beings. This opening up, i.e., this deconcealing, i.e., the truth of beings, happens in the work. In the art work, the truth of what is has set itself to work. Art is truth setting itself to work.11

Art is thinking Being, and therefore all art is poetry; art thinks Being by participating in physis, the "emerging and rising in itself and in all things" so that "earth" and "world" are bonded and set forth in an unprecedented manner. Serving as the grounding of the combination is "earth":

Earth is that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises without violation. In the things that arise, earth is present as the sheltering agent.12

Earth is work-material. It supports "world," which is open, while earth itself as self-secluding is utterly transvalued, whatever the work-material, by the setting up of world.13 "World" is a more esoteric component:

To be a work is to set up a world. . . . The world is not the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar. . . . neither is it a merely imagined framework. . . . The world worlds, and is more fully in being than the tangible and perceptible
realm in which we believe ourselves to be at home. World is never an object that stands before us and can be seen. World is the ever-nonobjective to which we are subject as long as the paths of birth and death, blessing and curse keep us transported into Being. Wherever these decisions of our history that relate to our very being are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, go unrecognized, and are rediscovered by new inquiry, there the world worlds. \textsuperscript{14}

The work is an open space for such an earth/world happening or striving. This tension of cooperative but differing forces or vectors which mesh even as they struggle is a manifestation of \textit{physis} or the oscillation of being and non-being:

The earth is the spontaneous forthcoming of that which is continually self-secluding and to that extent sheltering and concealing. World and earth are essentially different from one another and yet are never separated. The world grounds itself on the earth and earth juts through world. \textsuperscript{15}

Their striving is the conflict and the beauty shining in the artwork so that "the opponents raise each other into the self-assertion of their natures":

In the struggle, each opponent carries the other beyond itself. Thus the striving becomes ever more intense as striving, and more authentically what it is. The more the struggle overdoes itself on its own part, the more inflexibly do the opponents let themselves go into the intimacy of simple belonging to one another. . . . The work-being of the work consists in the fighting of the battle between world and earth. It is because the struggle arrives at its high point in the simplicity of intimacy
that the unity of the work comes about in the fighting of the battle. The fighting of the battle is the continually self-everreaching gathering of the work's agitation. The repose of the work that rests in itself thus has its presentencing in the intimacy of striving.\textsuperscript{16}

Moreover, the truth in the work is not correctness of representation or mimesis; it is the revelation of being inscribed or written existentially within the striving: "setting up a world and setting forth the earth, the work is the fighting of the battle in which the unconcealedness of beings as a whole, or truth, is won."\textsuperscript{17} Furthermore, beauty is one way that truth is revealed; beauty is one possible aspect of truth.\textsuperscript{18} It can also be "the opposition of clearing and concealing" or even "the thinker's questioning."\textsuperscript{19} The truth brought forth in the artwork is unique forever, "the bringing forth of a being such as never was before and will never come to be again."\textsuperscript{20} It is lighted by that "intimacy with which opponents belong to each other":

This rift carries the opponents into the source of their unity by virtue of their common ground. It is a basic design, an outline sketch, that draws the basic features of the rise of the lighting of beings. This rift does not let the opponents break apart; it brings the opposition of measure and boundary into their common outline.\textsuperscript{21}

The strife of the opponents is a figure or Gestalt, "the structure in whose shape the rift composes the submits itself."\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, "art is the fixing in place of a
self-establishing truth in the figure," an unconcealing. 23 Heidegger implies that such a definition of art presupposes and includes the ek-static temporality of Dasein, first outlined in Being and Time. 24 Poetry especially is ek-static, an "illuminating projection," which moves away from the ordinary or familiar, designated "unbeing," which is unable "to give and keep being as measure." 25 The illuminating projection of poetry "unfolds of concealedness and projects ahead into the design of the figure," the structure which becomes the resource for subsequent hermeneutic inquiry. The art Gestalt is unique, "an overflow, an endowing, a bestowal." 26 In it, the ordinary is thrust down while the unfamiliar and extraordinary is thrust up, and every new artwork is a renewal or beginning of history. 27 Thus, for Heidegger, all poetry is apparently on the status level of the epic:

Projective saying is poetry: the saying of world and earth, the saying of the arena of their conflict and thus of the place of all nearness and remoteness of the gods. Poetry is the saying of the unconcealedness of what is. Actual language at any given moment is the happening of this saying, in which a people's world historically arises for it and the earth is preserved as that which remains closed. Projective saying is saying which in preparing the sayable, simultaneously brings the unsayable as such into a world. In such saying, the concepts of an historical people's nature, i.e., of its belonging to world history, are formed for that folk, before it. 28
Meditating further on the language of poetry (and the poetry of language) in his essays "Language" and "The Way to language," Heidegger seems to privilege poetic words as "spoken purely." But poetry is not a mimetic representation or subjective human expression; rather, a poem is an opening for a "speaking of language," or "the poetry of the spoken word." Insisting that the romantic idea of poetry as expressed utterance is "insufficient," Heidegger contends that language itself names, calls and bids:

The place of arrival which is also called in the calling is a presence sheltered in absence. The naming call bids things to come into such an arrival. Bidding is inviting. It invites things in, so that they may bear upon men as things . . . This gathering, assembling, letting-stay is the thinging of things. The unitary fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities, which is stayed in the thinging of things, we call—the world. In the naming, the things named are called into their thinging. Thinging, they unfold world. . . . Thinging, things are things. Thinging, they gesture—gestate—world.

Rather than existing alongside each other, thing and world interpenetrate in a striving apparently akin to the conflict and cooperation of earth and world in the essay on art. Like the polemos of being and non-being imposed on the emergence of the essent in physis, world and thing are held apart with a "dif-ference," a unique dimension that joins and yet separates "the middle in and through which
world and things are at one with each other." Thus world and thing are carried away and toward one another with the same motion. Heidegger cautions that the difference is not a relation of differences in the representational tradition; it is not an abstract relation. As dimension, it "measures out, apportions, world and thing, each to its own":

Its allotment of them first opens up the separateness and towardness of world and thing. Such an opening up is the way in which the difference here spans the two. The difference, as the middle for world and things, metes out the measure of their presence. In the bidding that calls thing and world, what is really called is: the difference. Any world so appropriated and the things resting or reposing in and with it incorporate Heidegger's fourfold: earth, the matrix of supporting entities; sky, the celestial field which acts as foreground for measuring the distance between man and the divine; gods, the personified supernatural forces of wisdom, providence, and love; and mortals, death-in-life. An intersection of the fourfold, Dasein or meaning-creating humanity is separate and yet one ontologically with things as transvalued extra-linguistic entities: the difference dimension is responsible for this relationship; but is not the abstract relationship per se. Literary art concretizes the difference as "gathering calling" or "pealing";
language speaks ontologically as "the peal of stillness," not as human expression but as linguistic appropriation.\textsuperscript{37}

Reversing the usual hierarchical value, Heidegger maintains that poetry dis-closes and uncovers the possibilities and metaphor tarnished in everyday use of language, familiar speech:

> What is purely bidden in mortal speech is what is spoken in the poem. Poetry proper is never merely a higher mode of everyday language. It is rather the reverse: everyday language is a forgotten and therefore used-up poem, from which there hardly resounds a call any longer.\textsuperscript{38}

To take advantage of this opportunity, mortals must listen attentively:

> Every word of mortal speech speaks out of such a listening. . . . Mortals speak insofar as they listen. They heed the bidding call of the stillness of the difference even when they do not know that call. Their listening draws from the command of the difference what it brings out as sounding word. This speaking that listens and accepts is responding.\textsuperscript{39}

"Language speaks," Heidegger claims; and furthermore, "man speaks only as he responds to language."\textsuperscript{40}

In "The Way to Language," Heidegger makes a more startling claim that language is a mystery, communing "solely with itself alone" and "concerned exclusively with itself."\textsuperscript{41} Human being (Heidegger's Dasein) is "with language before all else."\textsuperscript{42} It is a web of relations into which we humans are interwoven even as we attempt to
discourse about it, apparently caught in "a hopeless
tangle." Metaphysical thinking has transformed the sign
"from something that shows to something that designates." He proposes to abandon this tradition and "general
notions such as energy, activity, labor, power of the
spirit, world view, or expression"; he argues that the way
to language is "to let language be experienced as language,"
a phenomenological reduction to get at its ontological
import. This "unifying unity of the being of language"
is the "design," which includes a suggestion of essent
oscillation:

To design is to cut a trace. Most of us
know the word "sign" only in its debased
meaning--lines on a surface. But we make
a design also when we cut a furrow into
the soil to open it to seed and growth.
The design is the whole of the traits of
that drawing which structures and prevails
throughout the open, unlocked freedom of
language. The design is the drawing of
the being of language, the structure of a
show in which are joined the speakers and
their speaking: what is spoken and what
of it is unspoken in all that is given in
the speaking.

He discriminates between speaking "to" and "with" the
other:

To speak to one another means: to say
something, show something to one another,
and to entrust one another mutually to
what is shown. To speak with one another
means: to tell of something jointly, to
show to one another what that which is
claimed in the speaking says in the
speaking, and what it, of itself, brings
to light. What is unspoken is not merely
something that lacks voice, it is what
remains unsaid, what is not yet shown, what has not yet reached its appearance. That which must remain wholly unspoken is...mystery.\textsuperscript{47}

The "showing" characteristic of language is its essential being; but this showing is not based on the metaphysical concept of sign or "signs of any kind."\textsuperscript{48} Human beings are able to control language with only limited success; thrown into the system that was created before we existed personally, we are forced to contend with the historicity of saying, that aggregate of intentionality and web of interrelations marked in and by language during previous generations. Thus, as we speak or express ourselves and our ways of being-in-the-world we write ourselves, choosing and extending ourselves temporally toward the horizon of possibility; but the language or symbolic Other into which we are thrown existentially mediates and modifies self-expression and personal freedom. The showing of language as Saying is not a sociocultural force or pressure that determines personal being and choice; it is an absence or indirect shaping that gathers and ebbs with the choices, especially linguistic and existential choices made by humans.

For the student of literature or the philosophy of language, the best commentaries to date on Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology and later meditations on language and literature are \textit{Martin Heidegger and the Question}

Commenting on Heidegger's methodology, Magliola discusses the intersubjectivity of Dasein:

Language speaks Being, and speaks as well the individual beings which are fractions of Being. Those individual beings which are human, and therefore constitute Dasein, are organically related to each other. Language, in speaking Dasein, must also tell of the relationships among human existents. For this reason, language founds human history. And history, for its part, is a "single conversation."49

Magliola makes an important distinction between Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology and the structuralist school:

For a pure structuralist, written or spoken words (paroles) refer only to each other and do so through couplings of sound and sense determined by the grammar and lexic of a people's language (langue). The system of language...is thus self-enclosed and does not recognize reference to the
real world. On the other hand, conventional linguistics has interpreted language as "sign or cipher". . . and has considered language referential: words point to the real world, and according to some linguists, even correspond to the real form of that world. Martin Heidegger denies that poetic language is referential in the ordinary sense, that of pointing towards the outside. But (unlike the Parisian Structuralists) he does not exclude referentiality in a broader sense, that of language referring to a pre-linguistic world.\textsuperscript{50}

Finding a common matrix in "the idea of mutual implication" in rift, striving, and difference, Magliola characterizes Being in Heidegger's thought as a double refraction between "World" and "Thing," where World is Dasein as a transcendent (ontological) intersection of the Fourfold.\textsuperscript{51} He explains Heidegger's Fourfold as "an energy field" upon which Things are "silhouetted."\textsuperscript{52} Moreover, he suggests that the artwork is difference.\textsuperscript{53} He faults Heidegger for ignoring the subjectivity of the artist in theory while exploring the artist's \textit{Lebenswelt}.\textsuperscript{54} Admiring the "brilliant" theory advanced by Heidegger, Magliola nevertheless attacks Heidegger's praxis:

Since Heidegger ignores verbal texture, his discourse with the text is not concrete discourse. On the contrary, his practice is thematic in the bad sense. One would think that notions such as the Fourfold and Thingness (so attractive in Heidegger's theoretical work) would produce a new and original kind of archetypal criticism. Unfortunately, Heidegger's critical practice at its worst is merely allegorical, and at its
best is archetypal in a very conventional way. . . . In short, Heidegger's practice does not even make a contribution to the archetypal criticism. . . . Heidegger misses another opportunity, too. He does not demonstrate in concreto what is one of the most fertile of his theories, the "workly being" of the literary work. He dismisses formal considerations. . . . He likewise shunts beauty aside.\textsuperscript{55}

Magliola is only willing to admit that Heidegger has contributed to the theory of the symbol.\textsuperscript{56} He concurs with Ricoeur that overlapping or "complementarity" exists between structuralism and phenomenology: involved in the hermeneutic circle, the Heideggerians concentrate on the temporality and unfolding of the truth of the work; the structuralists take an objective stance of scientific observation.\textsuperscript{57} Further on, he offers a succinct explanation of the hermeneutic circle and the concept of forestructure:

We have seen that meanings change because as-questions differ. But the work itself also changes, and this because its as-which formations, or aspects, change. . . . Heidegger is saying that contradictory interpretations (and the schools which project them) can be accepted as such without ontological embarrassment. Nor is this relativism, since the latter world "found" its truth on the values of the believing group pure and simple. Heidegger, on the other hand, finds truth on Being, and this truth is only mediated through the values of the group.\textsuperscript{58}

In David White's impressive and meticulous study of Heidegger's later thought, he also stresses that metaphysical
considerations are inadequate:

Heidegger will contend that the notion of language as a vehicle of description is based on modes of representation (Vorstellen) which, by their very nature, distort, or misrepresent, the being of what is represented. In addition, he emphasizes that Heidegger's study suspends cognitive, emotive, and psychological considerations. White's analysis of Heidegger's language theory is complex, extended, and sophisticated.

Discussing the theory of space-time, White explains that it is a "continuum within which the word can function as a name and into which we must enter if we wish to understand how a word functions in all respects; it is implied by the phenomenon of naming, and "must be present to ground the ontological possibility of a word and the purely linguistic relation between entity named and the name itself." An important element of space-time is motion, an "oscillating sphere" or "interplay" between the entity and its naming word. Measuring the relation between word and thing, this space-time is non-representational and "must itself be grounded in an extra-linguistic reality." Contributing to the formation of thinghood is the Fourfold, an "embryonic cosmology." Saying, the "reciprocal movement," commences and endures "only when entities interrelate within a spatio-temporal continuum bounded by the sectors of the Fourfold." This
continuum involves an ek-static temporality:

Space-time grounds the appropriation of language through a comprehensive presence which plays into all those reaches of time representationally cast as the past, the present, the future. Since Heidegger is convinced that presence includes the past and the future in this sense, his strategy is to rethink time so that both past and future may be apprehended as a kind of present. But he also wants to preserve the distinctive characteristics of pastness and futurity with respect to our experience of an ever-flowing present now. This preservation of difference in sameness is, of course, the core of the problem.66

Thus, space-time continuum grounds meaning, making utterances of past cultures meaningful in the present. Language acquires a self-sustaining momentum of its own. White characterizes this grounding as "the spreading out of the now as presence from past through present to future."67 Without this phenomenon, history as the human writing of meaning would disappear.

Meanings are affixed to extra-linguistic entities, transforming them into meaningful things for Dasein's useful being-in-the-world:

At the moment when entity is joined to word, the word becomes realized as a linguistic element, a term with significance, communicative power, and the possibility of public usefulness. But the term is a word only if its denotation exists in relation to the totality of the spatio-temporal continuum and the differentiating sectors of that continuum, the fourfold. An entity, if shown in this linguistic
sense, \textit{lingers} in this continuum and exists ontologically as a thing in virtue of this primordial oscillation. The thing as constituted by a word naming that thing always lingers in the possibility of extending its being from a present occurrence of that word back into the past and forward into the future. . . . The name \textit{represents} the entity, thus guaranteeing its position as a possible referent, and also \textit{presents} the entity as a thing by stabilizing its oscillations within the spatio-temporal motion of the fourfold.  

Mortal naming is a process of "circumscription" or "a reciprocal movement from world to thing and around the four sectors of the fourfold"; it is also a "delicate interplay between named entity as granting thing and the gestating world which grounds the being of that thing."  

At times, the play or oscillation is called a conversation.  

Especially potent ontologically is the saying of Dasein, particularly poetizing and thinking Saying. Heidegger is interested in "fateful linguistic events" and their "temporality of presence as shown in the meaning of a given thoughtful or poetized word." Experiencing "ontological sadness," the realization that representational language is inadequate to encounter the world authentically, the poet can appreciate the difference between Being and beings (that there is no grounding relationship):
For language controlled by logic, the process of speaking and rationally relating what is spoken is painful in the sense that the unity of being and beings has been ripped apart into diversity and separation. The extent to which mortal speakers of language are aware of this pain is the extent to which the pain can be, as it were, mitigated. . . by attending to what is spoken in terms of its relations to the unity of being. Pain is real at this ontological level, just as real as physical or psychical pain, but the evidence for its reality is located in the gaps between how we linguistically represent the being of entities named and how these entities ought to be named to preserve the unity from which their being originates.¹¹

The poet's pain lies in "affixing mortal speaking to what will always be other than him, that is, whatever is named in his poem. . . a consequence of the continuous presence of the other." ⁷² However, the poet's ontological pain is invariably accompanied by his ontological "joy":

Joy names the process in which extra-linguistic entities move from rest through saying and into the discrimination of human speaking. Joy follows upon linguistic attunement to the nature of being insofar as beings bear spoken relations to being. Joy is the moral response to the summons that beings be named and spoken properly.⁷³

Whenever the poet invokes apartness, there is the pain; but the poetic gathering of things and world in his poeticizing unifying calls the joy. Symbols and mythic
patterns and structures may assume their apparent presence or import because they skim atop such ontological rhythms. White gives some fascinating examples or possibilities. 74

Thus thinghood transcends appearances and rests upon and within such complementarity interplay. Because they enter into "the realm of the holy," poets are more "venturesome" and are engaged in "ontological risk." 75 Measuring man against God in the realm of the holy, the poet explores being in the oscillation of the fourfold to unconceal the being of the deity; thus, poeticizing is a "privileged and precarious" position for opening the horizons and possibilities for human being. 76 The poet thus allows the approaching nearness of God and man on the grounding of the holy. 77 The special open Spielraum of the poem provides a place for "lingering" of the holy and an authentic manner of being and relating relative to the metaphysical onto-theological subject-object relationship:

Heidegger conceives the subject-object link as a relation bound to a temporality which cannot pass beyond the limits of a present now. This present now is the moment when entity X faces entity Y as subject to object. Heidegger's inference is that the being of both entity X and entity Y is foreshortened in virtue of the one-dimensional temporality which lacks them into the subject-object relation. Only if a more primordial "openness" surrounds the two entities will the proper temporality of the entities be
discerned, and, perhaps, the proper ontological nature of those entities. L"{a}ngere is the name Heidegger introduces to capture the temporality of that openness. ... Lingering breaks down the static ever-present character of the subject-object relation, thereby establishing the possibility that an entity can become a thing in conjunction with all three representationally distinguished temporal dimensions.\textsuperscript{78}

Establishing peace, "the harmonious interaction between or among distinguishable parts," the lingering enables the entity to be appropriated as meaningful thing for the world of Dasein:

The thing is present in presence (a) by lingering toward the world as differentiated by the fourfold and (b) by perduring through the oscillating motion of absence as it plays into the totality of presence. The entity becomes appropriated as thing when it lingers toward the world as fourfold. The temporality of the thing is based on each of the four sectors of world as assembled and united in one totality.\textsuperscript{79}

Because one vital sector of the fourfold, the deity, has been hidden or lacking since the death of Jesus, the ontological rhythms and meanings of things and world are asymmetrical, foreshortened:

The absence of the deity and the absence of presence run parallel to one another in terms of ultimate ontological significance. Until the absence of the deity is accepted as part of the present, and thus part of presence, it will be impossible to measure the temporality of a thing as that thing is governed by this absence.\textsuperscript{80}
Presence is thereby flawed and incomplete:

The temporality of presence is bound up not with a time existing independently as a container uniting a flux of moments, but with time insofar as it is in entities as thing, insofar as it relates one thing to all other things, and insofar as this relation partakes in the totality of presence. 81

Because poetizing is thinking Being as such (the difference between Being and beings), poetry is the ideal opportunity for abandoning metaphysical thinking which has distorted the difference by covering it over. Contemporary humans are, according to Heidegger, fleeing from the responsibility of thinking, save calculative planning for practical and determined projects. Reflective thinking and poetizing is not directed to practical ends. Courageous Daseins abandon technological and representational thinking in order to re-open and preserve the horizon of human possibilities and relations with thinghood in the world.

_Gelassenheit_ or releasement is the meditative thinking worked out in the conversation about language and thinking discussed by a scholar, a teacher, and a scientist on a country path removed from human activities and habitation. 82 Heidegger uses "the poeticized name of apartness" to characterize the being of the three participants:
The dramatic force of apartness pervades the general context of the action—the three conversants are apart from their homes, apart from each other in terms of their respective technical vocabularies, and apart from a proper understanding of man. . . so now we must stay apart from man to determine the essence of man with respect to the thinking of things in their release¬ment.83

The teacher attempts to help the limited ability of the scientist's representational thinking by introducing the concept of "waiting," rather than "awaiting":

Awaiting is always relative to representation and what is being represented—thus, when we await some entity, we know that the entity will appear as an object, and identical qua object with all other representations in our store of past and future knowledge. . . . the waiting essential to releasing entities as things entails renouncing the entire set of cognitive and practical preoccupations conditioned by representation¬al thinking. . . . Man waits for things by, as it were, lingering with them. As we have seen, lingering is a property of the temporality of presence and has its roots in the poeticed language about the lacking deity and its immediate effect on the holy and divine.84

Humanity is continually called to re-open the questioning, interpreting ("analysis") of being human. Existential courage, termed by Heidegger "resolution" or "steadfastness," is appropriate to attain and hold open the ontological mood of Gelassenheit. Such meditative thinking, inherent and implicit in human being, is "a difficult and cryptic enterprise," and it includes "release¬ment toward things" and "openness to the mystery."85
His commentators hear Heidegger as urging contemporary humans to assume deliberately an unwilled stance, authentic and introspective, "a kind of transmutation of themselves, toward a commitment which will enable them to pass out of their bondage to what is clear and evident but shallow, on to what is ultimate, however obscure and difficult." Admitting that Heidegger "writes in the manner and with the poetic tone of the mystics," one of his translators contends that the philosopher does intend "to reawaken modern man to the significance of the nature of Being." Waiting upon, rather than waiting for, such thinking leaves the question open:

It does not construct a world of objects. By contrast to representative thinking, it is thinking which allows content to emerge within awareness, thinking which is open to content. Now thinking which constructs a world of objects understands these objects; but meditative thinking begins with an awareness of the field within which these objects are, an awareness of the horizon rather than of the objects of ordinary understanding.

Meditative thinking is "the field of awareness itself . . . open to what is given," and "involves an annulling of the will," although it is not a passive state. Indeed, it is "a higher kind of activity. . . . We might think of it, metaphorically, as the activity of walking along a path which leads to Being." Such activity is "releaseament to," "a kind of steadfastness which is related to a resolve for truth, and which when fully
comprehended is to be called "in-dwelling." The openness is dynamic activity, which Heidegger names "regioning" or "that which regions." Authentic human being waits upon history, "bringing forth of all natures":

To comprehend fully this bringing forth of all natures, one must observe that for man to resolve for truth and so to serve that-which-regions in this movement is to set aside subjective demands and pretensions, to be, in a word, noble.

In his lectures after World War II at the University of Freiburg, Heidegger claimed that "we are still not thinking":

Thinking is, in the first place, not what we call having an opinion or a notion. Second, it is not representing or having an idea (vorstellen) about something or a state of affairs. . . Third, thinking is not ratiocination, developing a chain of premises which lead to a valid conclusion. Lastly, it is not conceptual or systematic in the sense favored by the German idealistic tradition.

Heidegger is deliberately rejecting technological or scientific thinking that can solve problems or produce knowledge; instead, he is concerned with the autonomous thinking of poeticizing and philosophizing. This phenomenology of thinking "is determined by that which is to be thought as well as by him who thinks"; "Being's receptivity to man" is also at stake in this reciprocal Saying. What Heidegger is proposing is a special way to live:
Thinking is not so much an act as a way of living or dwelling. . . . It is a remembering who we are as human beings and where we belong. It is a gathering and focusing of our whole selves on what lies before us and a taking to heart and mind these particular things before us in order to discover in them their essential nature and truth.  

It may take an entire lifetime of such existence to understand what is disclosed all the years we live; but "the more thoughtless we are, the less human we are." Such a way of life demands "solitary courage":

Thinking takes root and therefore grounds the thinker in the stability of the earth in conjunction with the other parts or sectors of the whole. Thinking approaches an entity, recognizes its perceptual exterior, then releases the entity into its proper ontological thinghood by experiencing that exterior as a directional guide to the interplay of the four sectors of the fourfold. Each thing becomes a thing in its own relation to the region; here the entity as thing rests and lingers in a temporality which constitutes the limits of space-time as presence and through the play of the near and the remote. The thinker must wait for the entity as thing to settle into its proper place before showing that thinghood through spoken language.

Moreover, the flux of "ontological historicism" affects and shapes human poeticizing to the extent that eventually, the fourfold itself will "vanish as an essential perspective on the nature of being, just as the presence of that which is present may also vanish in subsequent epochs." Ek-static temporality and the
fourfold are "divergent but apparently compatible"; neither is ontologically privileged or representational. Heidegger is not claiming, as Derrida and others have charged, that Being or language (poeticizing-thinking) is an absolute ground or full gathering of presence. He sees his work as perhaps issuing forth from traditional metaphysics, but (as creative projection) transcending metaphysics. He is looking for ontological structures, but not metaphysical forms; Heidegger is a phenomenologist who does not separate appearances from essences. He is not caught up necessarily in the great problem of the "Absolute Ground," a trope "which, without itself needing any explanatory ground, can be the ground of everything and explain everything."

Absolute ground is readily allied with spiritual monism and theology; but it also encompasses such absolutizings as "Life, Evolution, Freedom, Progress, the Proletariat, the Eternal Return, Matter," all of which may, of course, coincide with ont-theology. Far from being an error, this tendency was the impetus for our technological achievements:

The major accomplishment of Western thought was the ability to discern from the wealth of phenomena certain general concepts and principles that could be applied to the natural world in a predictive sense, providing additional knowledge and enabling thinkers to refine their theoretical understanding of both structure and process. Perhaps the greatest single contribution made by early Western thinkers in this respect was the
belief of Pythagoras that knowledge could be achieved by understanding harmonies and proportions. Once an objective standard of comparison became possible, scientific knowledge as we know it today began to emerge. The history of Western scientific and philosophical thought records the twists and turns that the refining process took. Out of this history emerged certain basic concepts—space, time, matter, energy, and causality—that have dominated and shaped the Western understanding of the kosmos. . . . Western philosophy continually faced the practical requirement of presenting its ideas in picturable form. . . the increasing success of Western technology made it appear that our species was finally grasping a firm knowledge of the universe. . . . The success of Newtonian mechanics in predicting phenomena in the physical world proved incredibly accurate, and Newtonian formulas were considered the ultimate description of natural processes for centuries. . . when Newtonian physics established a priori that space, time, matter, energy, and causality were inherent in the structure of the universe, and when Newtonian formulas proved immensely successful in exploring the solar system, Western thinkers forgot that these concepts were definitions generated in Newton's mind, and they came to believe that they were accurate descriptions of ultimate physical processes.103

Such technological and representational thinking is directly opposed and alien to Heidegger's meditative, authentic Gelassenheit: instead, it is a manifestation of the universal wisdom of the "They," familiar "truth" that the Everyone knows, that which goes-without-saying:

"Representative" thought is pursued by the sciences. They claim to mirror the "in-itself," "brute" reality, in an
exact way. For this reason their thinking is also called "calculative" thinking. As long as one remains within the limits of their claim, Dasein feels secure. This security and peace, however, are illusory. They can collapse at any moment. This happens when Dasein comes to the realization that be-ing precisely as "in itself" is meaningless.104

Modern theoretical physics joins contemporary metaphysics in the attack on absolute grounds, Vorstellen picture-building, and absolute space and time in particular. Like the phenomenologists, "scientists now recognize that they have become part of any experiment they undertake because the instruments they use are intruding into the functioning of nature in new and unexpected ways."105 Einstein's re-alignment of space and time into the related four-dimensional space-time with gravity as a curvature rather than a force is an example. In particular, the quantum theory of physics allows for the ambiguity of phenomena (light as both wave and particles), a relationship of complementarities in play bringing to mind Derridean jeu Heideggerian aletheia, Lacanian inmixing of the Other, and the matter-energy interplay and interdependence of the Einsteinian equation for being. Virtually without center or rest, these relationships do not structure being or reality; but they are the deconstructed track or trace of difference, the re-markable unveiling of "truth," that lets things be and
come to light, the oscillation of the essent towards but never reaching the non-essent. Recent physical and metaphysical meditation has attacked all absolutes, "bringing theology and science together again."¹⁰⁶ Physicist Werner Heisenberg, discussing quantum theory vis-à-vis Descartes and Kant on space and time, echoes Heidegger's meditations on the problematic equation between word and thing:

Any concepts or words which have been formed in the past through the interplay between the world and ourselves are not really sharply defined with respect to their meaning; that is to say, we do not know exactly how far they will help us in finding our way in the world. We often know that they can be applied to a wide range of inner or outer experience, but we practically never know precisely the limits of their applicability. This is true, even of the simplest and most general concepts like "existence" and "space and time." Therefore, it will never be possible by pure reason to arrive at some absolute truth.¹⁰⁷

Fundamental to all of Heidegger's observations on language and art is his Dasein, a complementarity of humanity and world, human-being-in-the-world in a very active sense. If Saying and language are prominent in Heidegger's later thought, we are to understand that Dasein, a transcendental self, is implicitly acknowledged as reciprocal with Saying, because language is so pre-eminently human behavior. Rethinking the metaphysical, Cartesian, and ultimately Platonic categories of subject
and object for his fundamental ontology, Heidegger consistently challenges the traditional Western view that reality is continuous presence, contending instead that such arguments for eidos and ousia hide faulty assumptions about the reciprocity and interdependence of being and time. Scrutinizing the temporal nature of human behavior and understanding, Heidegger demonstrates that Dasein's temporality is an equation of complex and interdependent variables in which past choices or decisions are critical for the shaping and development of the future or horizon of possibilities; the writing of Dasein is ek-static. Furthermore, Dasein is a clearing-space for the revelation of Being; Dasein is "a process," "a function," "a field," "the experiencer of experiences," "the ontological ground of the emergence of both the world as it is commonly meant and of the ego or self," the "speaking word" left in applying the phenomenological reduction to experience. 108 Asking the meaning of existence in its world, Dasein reflects and inquires into its own being, what it means to be:

Dasein is something which...projects itself into a nothingness, whatever this might mean. What Heidegger wants to suggest is...that Dasein is nothing apart from this projection. ...Dasein is indeed not a fact, but a nothingness; a relation, a gap, an in-between. 109

Bringing to mind Lacan's sense of self as torus, Luijpen and Koren characterize Dasein as a lack:
One can say with Sartre that man is a "hole in being." Man is never finished . . . he must continually stretch himself forward to a new future. . . . 110
Man is a task, a task-in-the-world.

Though it is not a psychological or ethical state, Dasein is, though ontological, in every case mine, ontic, "a finite self who must choose an unchosen situation in order to free his possibilities, the last of which, foretold by castration, is death."111 As intentional consciousness, Dasein discloses and projects world as meaningful; existence is a "horizon of meanings" or "tissue" of "attitudes, interests, and utilizations," an oscillation between authentic and inauthentic.112 Calvin Schrag focuses specifically on the intentionality of Dasein:

Intentionality defines the conjunctions or connective tissues which interlace experiencer, figure, and background within the field structure of world-experience. To experience is to intend figures, bring them to light, draw them out of concealment, and define their place within an existential spatio-temporal coordinate. To experience is to intend a background, against which figures are postured and relative to which the movements of embodied experience exhibit a directionality. These vectors of intentionality which permeate the experiential field are bearers of meaning. Intentionality thus becomes, both in its pre-reflective and reflective expression, the achievement of meaning. Meaning is generated within experience and shades off into multiple modalities of cognitive, willed, and felt meanings. As the bearer of meaning, intentionality provides the ground for the unity of experience.113
Luijpen and Koren add that Dasein's intentionality is "unity-in-opposition," past choices and future possibilities: "In choosing for or against a particular possibility, man explicitly takes up his involvement in his situation." Vernon Gras elaborates on Dasein's characteristic modalities and self-projection:

The fundamental structure of human Dasein is process, a temporality of action and decision. Whereas a thing has an external relation to time, merely enduring time as a series of "nows" without past or future, human Dasein, or existence, projects into the future, while as "thrown" always finds itself with a past. . . . Only by unifying properly his future and past in the present does Dasein live authentically. Because man is fundamentally a temporality, his existence is not a static entity but an emerging, unfolding development. In and through temporality, human Dasein discloses the things that are while simultaneously creating his own identity. Human existence becomes world disclosure and can best be described as the place (or "there") where particular beings appear and take on meaning. The motion of Dasein extending itself through the future, past, and present "ecstacies" of temporality constitutes the historicity whereby Being becomes accessible as meaning via human consciousness. Historicity thus reveals itself both as the inescapable mode of understanding Being and as the characteristic of Dasein and culture in general. Accordingly, literature as well as other cultural products should be studied existentially.

Edward Ballard also discusses the temporality of human action and decision in his study of the phenomenology of time:
Lived time is constituted of discrete lived organic intervals having a characteristic triadic structure; the continuity of time results from its hierarchic character—from the inclusion within a present phase of its immediately past and future elements and from the inclusion of other intervals in any given interval by way of memory and anticipation. Each such interval and succession of intervals are structured in the more complex instances by meaning relations. Of such a nature is time lived. It is clearly inconceivable as an empty objective flow to which contents may or may not be added. It is not like a container, independent of its contents. On the contrary, lived time is woven of its contents, of events, experienced as passing.

"Time, then," he concludes later on, "if human, is possible meaning; it is the realm of possible beginnings and endings." Another critic, intent on finding phenomenological time or temporality in Wallace Stevens' later poetry, dwells on the character of the so-called "present moment" in this triadic structure described by Ballard and others:

Part of the complex sense of human time, the narrator implies, is the appreciation of the irretrievable quality of each instant. The present then becomes a possible moment of vision in which one projects toward the future the authentic possibilities of being.

Contributing the most imaginative, sensitive and meticulous study of the phenomenology of Heideggerian time vis-à-vis human consciousness is Alphonso Lingis in
his essay, "Authentic Time":

Time is the internal order or structure of the soul; time is its præcipium individuationis. A Dasein that is on its own has a time of its own. Its moves are not inscribed in the public line of nows endlessly succeeding one another--time of recurrence--everydayness--but in a trajectory of time that originates by birth to project itself to its death. 119

Authentic Dasein builds its individual essence by "dropping out" of this public or "They" time whose past, present, and future nows are "equivalent and inter-changeable," opting instead for an existence of one's own that uses time rather than being used by time. 120 This is accomplished by Dasein's rehearsal in anxiety of the one sure possibility on its horizons, that of its own death:

The sense of void imminent makes my life pulsate for me with anxiety...it separates the individual line of the pulse of life in me from the anonymous and everywhere recurrent patterns of behavior...the anticipation of death is already a dying. The apprehension of the being whose scope and span are measured by nothingness, by death, must be a life's own work, a work that is internal and positive. 121

Death alone makes the future possible, Lingis contends: "All possible, all future being comes to us from the region of death." 122 Facing death or nothingness, appropriating death as a possibility of my own, I am sprung out of the rhythms of common ("They") time: "I am then not just thrown into a world where it is possible to operate as
anyone operates; I am sent forth into a world for destined
tasks, singular and finite." Anxiety, the dread of
facing death and nothingness, is not a psychological state
of fear:

Anxiety anticipates, projects itself
across my whole future, all its possi-
bility, unto the confines of the im-
possible; it disengages what possi-
bilities are but for me from those that
are for anyone.124

Lingis specifically defends Heidegger against Derrida:

Systemically opposing the criticisms
formulated by Jacques Derrida, we can
now measure all the distance there is
between the metaphysical disclosure of
the sum of the ego in consciousness,
always self-conscious, absolute
presence, and the Heideggerian positing
of the authentic essence in conscience.
For Heidegger the disclosure of my
possible nothingness is more fundamental
than intuition into my actual being,
and the latter even comes out of the
former. . . . Understanding for
Heidegger will always be understanding
of the possible, power, and not . . .
intuition, representation.125

Arguing that anxiety "holds existence together as a
whole," Lingis explains that the "present" holds both
past and future, which are never remote or absent:
"My
past passes into the future, and what is to come to me is
what has come to be in me. . . . My times no longer dis-
place one another and pass away, but overlap, assemble."126

Essence is this "ec-static structure," and each act is
thus critical to my essential self:

This structure gives definitiveness to
each deed, decisiveness. . . . The
authentic life breaks with the irresoluteness of a life inscribed in unending time, where nothing is ever decided. Each deed is not only an upsurge of determinate potential, but fatal. One lives in, and dies from, each act. The time of a destiny is thus lived in a moment that may be the last moment. 127

Evolving from the ecstatic structure of phenomenal time is the "moment of destiny," an existential momentum:

The moment of destiny—destination and fatality—is the moment in which the whole of one's life is lived. The will to essence, to authenticity, is this will to have, to possess, at each moment, all one's time, to exist, in the moment, with all one's time. It is the will to give to the present, to one's presence in the world, the richest possible content, to pour into it one's whole past, one's whole future. 128

Such a pinnacle in one's life is not an instant out of identical nows, but is the result of all of my past choices and decisions which have brought me to this point of my essence and existence:

A moment of destiny: that high noon instant in which one recognizes that one is where one was destined to be, that one was born to be here, that everything that has come to pass in one came to bring one here, a presence that is accomplished in itself, such that one is free to die forthwith. Existence assembled to that point, ecstatic to that extent, still at its birth, already wholly at death, discharging all its forces in a decisive, fatal gesture which determines and terminates itself. 129

Extremely important for Heidegger, Lingis emphasizes, is
his discovery and conviction that "the absolute renuncia-
tion of being, projection of oneself into impotency," is
"a power still, a power inscribed in each exercise of
power in an existence that is veritally enacted," and
"each step into the openness of the world is at the same
time attracted by the void."\textsuperscript{130} Self-deliverance to the
possibility of my own death is self-liberation, because
by it I am given the power to set finite goals for myself
against that impending nothingness, rather than allowing
the "They" of vague opinion to rule my goals and acts
constantly. Projects of my own which define me can be
set up and pursued in the meantime. Maintaining that
"death is everywhere in the world," Heidegger proclaims
that "by allowing myself to be carried away into the
possibilities of the world I am projecting myself into the
certain death, into the impossible, into nothingness."\textsuperscript{131}
Out of the everyday absorption with things comes the
dreadful opportunity:

\begin{quote}
Anxiety thus begins in a situation
where the things lose the univocity
and urgency of their determinations,
and sink into a universal equivalence.
Where existence finds itself drifting,
adrift in a world emptied of its sense,
cosmos that no longer orders anything,
a spatiality then that is no longer a
world, spatiality without axes, with-
out landmarks, without sites, pure
proliferation or drifting of points.
Spieiraum, space of a pure play of
being, space of pure gratuity.\textsuperscript{132}
\end{quote}

Anxiety is less the fear of dying than "horror of not
being able to die, horror of finding oneself adrift in an existence where nothing begins, nothing ends, that is itself interminable." H urled out of the uncritical acceptance of ways to be and act from moment-to-moment by this Befindlichkeit or dreadful mood of Angst, called by personal conscience, Dasein lives with Care, a concerned dwelling in the world in which all choices, acts, and possibilities are appropriated and individualized, taken up as my own in order to write my own character and patchwork being, as Montaigne long ago urged. The terror and beauty of time are thus humanized in a complementarity or interplay of authentic and inauthentic modes of being.

The major prerequisites and hallmarks of a Heideggerian post-modern poetics are thus ontological, rooted in man's questioning and interpreting the Being of beings. Art opens up the Being of beings so that decisions about human potential and measure-taking can occur in the poetic event. Because poetry and thinking are inseparable and irreducible, the language-event of poetry brings something that is into the open for the first time, breaking up the familiar with hermeneutical violence. This "inaugural naming" reveals or discloses the new measure, especially a new measure-taking between human being and the divine: in such an event man can learn or appropriate new possibilities, reaching up into the unknown and undiscovered.
Concerned with the complacent, self-satisfied, shallow thinking of our technological society and Western culture, Heidegger challenged us to re-examine and transcend rational systems founded on absolutes and representational or mimetic correspondence theories. Instead, he exhorts us to remain open to the things themselves as they show themselves in our understanding and interpreting: re-interpreting the familiar, we can disclose the extraordinary, thereby realizing our authenticity as human beings. Rather than analyzing a literary text as a rational, spatial, or organic system or machine (in which the temporality of the text is spatialized) Heidegger suggests the poetic event is a field of contiguous and related things, a "world" set in and sheltered by earth: not a mimetic construct corresponding to a signified or truth, the world of the poetic text-event is not to be assumed to be linear or progressive either. The world set in earth that is the opening event marks or designs a measuring-relation; it does not have a "center" that organizes and idealizes. Heidegger deconstructs metaphors of presence, and his poet writes a "contradictory" poem. In the phenomenal being of art, the signifiers of the text are not designators, nor do they represent the voice of the poet: Heidegger deconstructs the subjectivity of his poet. The signifiers are the ontological equipment for the showing and measuring of the Being of beings, and are
not stamped with a fixed identity or meaning immune from re-interpretation.

In addition to Heidegger's own aesthetic pronouncements, his existential analytic of Dasein, his fundamental ontology, can prove useful for literary interpretation. Several attempts, primarily on post-modern poetry, have already been made. 134

DOUBLING AND DIFFÉRANCE: DERRIDA'S REVISIONS OF HEIDEGGER'S TEXTS

Throughout his discourse, Derrida cites Heidegger's destruction of metaphysics, onto-theology, and the determination of being as presence as an important radical de-centering; but his praise of Heidegger's radical revisions of the Western philosophical tradition is usually undercut, however, by the reservation that Heidegger is still caught up in the metaphysics of presence or "white mythology." For example, Heidegger's considerations of Nietzsche are offered "with as much lucidity and rigor as bad faith and misconstruction." 135 Elsewhere, he states, "we would especially like to raise the question whether, with respect to the relations between logos and phone, and with respect to the pretended irreducibility of certain word unities (the unity of the word being or of other 'radical words'), Heidegger's
thought does not sometimes raise the same questions as the metaphysics of presence. In "The Retrait of Metaphor," he charges that Heidegger's discourse on the trope of metaphor is privileged "as a transfer from the sensible to the intelligible." His most sustained attack on Western humanism, "The Ends of Man," charges Sartrean existentialism and even atheism with the fault of humanism. Yet, while approving Heidegger's rejection of anthropological humanism in Being and Time because "Dasein is not merely the man of metaphysics," Derrida alleges that the existential analytic falls into humanism: "We see, then, that Dasein, if it is not man, is not, however, other than man." Derrida invariably reiterates that Heidegger's ostensible destruction of metaphysics at least in part reinstates it:

> Beyond the enclosure common to humanism and metaphysics, Heideggerian thought is guided by the motif of Being as presence, understood in a more original sense than in the metaphysical and ontic determinations of presence or of presence in the present, and by the motif of the proximity of Being to the essence of man. Everything takes place as if the ontological distance recognized in Sein und Zeit had to be reduced and the proximity of Being to the essence of man had to be said.

Derrida charges that Heidegger's Letter on Humanism is but "revalorization of the essence and the dignity of man." Especially objectionable, in Derrida's opinion, are Heidegger's metaphors, "the values of neighborhood,
shelter, house, service, guard, voice, and listening."  
This ontic metaphorizing is an indication of the metaphysical bias inherent in the language, despite Heidegger's efforts to circumvent the problem.

Directly addressing the question of his relationship to Heidegger, answering the speculations and pronouncements of translators and critics, friends and detractors, Derrida tells the interviewers of the review *Promesse* the following: "I maintain...that Heidegger's text is of extreme importance, that it constitutes an unprecedented, irreversible advance and that we are still very far from having exploited all its critical resources."  
He emphatically denies, however, allegations that his writing resembles "a text of Heideggerian lineage," contending instead, "I have indicated, very explicitly...in all the essays I have published, a divergence in relation to the Heideggerian problematics." This divergence "is related, in particular, to those notions of origin and fall," and "also comes into play, correlatively, with respect to the value of own...which is perhaps the most persistent and difficult thread of Heidegger's thought."  
Criticizing the values of ownership and original authenticity, especially "the values of property, of proper meaning, of proximity to self, of etymology...necessary in regard to the body, consciousness, language, writing," Derrida analyzes "the wish and the metaphysical assumptions which
were at work" in Heidegger's thought. 145 "The most crucial and difficult question" is isolated in Heidegger's interpretations of the meaning of presence and the present, which Heidegger links correctly to the punctual Aristotelian now, a text deconstructed in turn by Derrida's Ousia et Gramme. 146

Despite his limitations imposed on his mentor's texts, Derrida reaffirms his respect for Heidegger's attempts and methodology: "I often have the feeling that the Heideggerian problematics is the 'deepest' and 'strongest' defense of what I am trying to question under the heading thought of presence." 147 Renouncing ontology and the sharp delineations of subject and object, perception and experience, and the punctual Aristotelian "now" presencing, recalling the difference between Being and beings, the so-called ontological difference forgotten by metaphysics of the West, Heidegger has provided the opening or horizon for Derrida's own écriture: "If we admit that différence (is) (itself) something other than presence and absence, if it traces, then we are dealing with the forgetting of the difference (between Being and beings) and we now have to talk about a disappearance of the trace's trace." 148 Heidegger's crossing out or erasure of Being is on-the-way but insufficient to describe or account for this difference, and Heidegger is at fault for suggesting even faintly that Being is the
master word or that the difference between Being and beings is the origin. Derrida's *differance*, neither a word nor a concept, a play of differences that is not nostalgia for an origin of presence, undercuts Heidegger's bipolarity by positing a simulacrum of presence always already inhabited by its other or absence. But Heidegger's erasure of Being (retaining its legibility) is both the "last writing" of metaphysics and the "first writing" of grammatology the science of *écriture*. 149 Heidegger's engagement in the ungrounding of ground prepares the way:

To come to recognize, not within but on the horizon of the Heideggerian paths, and yet in them, that the sense of being is not a transcendental or trans-epochal signified. . . but already, in a truly unheard of sense, a determined signifying trace, is to affirm that within the decisive concept of ontico-ontological difference, all is not to be thought at one go: entity and being, ontic and ontological, "ontico-ontological," are, in an original style, derivative with regard to difference; and with respect to what I shall later call *differance*, an economic concept designating the production of differing/deferring. The ontico-ontological difference and its ground in the "transcendence of *Dasein". . . are not absolutely originary. *Differance* by itself would be more "originary," but one would no longer be able to call it "origin" or "ground," those notions belonging essentially to the history of ontotechnology, to the system functioning as the effacing of difference. 150

Although Saussure, Hegel, Freud, and Nietzsche contributed to Derrida's thought and methodology, Heidegger's questions,
intellectual modalities, and discourse have opened the post-metaphysical track, as Gayatri Spivak ably indicates in the most comprehensive and informed analysis of Derrida's antecedents, her preface to her translation of his Grammatology. 151

In Of Grammatology, Derrida is concerned to show the extent and manner of pressure and repression brought to bear on language, especially written language. Before Heidegger's meditations and emendations, the ontology of presence had determined the meaning of (written) language to be "the full continuity of speech"; but the deconstruction of presence "accomplishes itself through the deconstruction of consciousness, and therefore through the irreducible notion of the trace as it appears in both Nietzschean and Freudian discourse."152 Furthermore, the bipolarity of inside-outside spacing familiar in all stages of Western metaphysics would not be apparent "without the gramme, without différence as temporalization, without the nonpresence of the other inscribed within the sense of the present, without the relationship with death as the concrete structure of the living present."153 Underpinning the monisms and dualisms predicated on the logos, ideal, or transcendental signifieds (also "the humbling of writing beneath a speech dreaming its plentitude") was no origin but an unnamed--
even unspeakable or unsayable—trace or différence stifled by the vulgar conception of time "thought in terms of spatial movement or of the punctual now," which dictated the linearist concept of speech, writing, and all Western philosophy from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel.154

Challenging this punctual time, a series of identical points enjoying equality in full presence uncontaminated by any other or each other, Heidegger's ek-static temporality in Being and Time and his questioning the difference between Being and beings have shaken the structure of the sign conceived as timeless itself or tied to a timeless and ideal essence or transcendental signified. In attacking the unified subjectivity of man, Heidegger shook the foundations of all absolutes, ideals, or essences which anchored signifiers to a transcendent Logos, because that Logos had been conceived as a plentitude of presence extrapolated from the self-presencing of man's subjectivity or unified consciousness and identity to himself. With the discovery of temporality of ek-static or interdependent phasing of so-called "past, present, and future," the uncontaminated punctual now was re-thought as identity in difference, permeated with radical alterity. Since Being is lived temporality, the human "subject" participating in being-in-the-world, was also continually and radically affected with difference or other. Freud's discovery that the psyche operates in
and by a structuration of difference and a trace of differences tended to support the conclusions and methodology of Heideggerian phenomenology. With the deconstruction of subjectivity, voice or speech as privileged access to presence over writing was bound to be questioned: late Heideggerian thought on being-in-the-world and existential analytic shifted to an overriding concern with language as a Saying that displaced humanism. This late Heideggerian shift from post-metaphysical "humanism" to a decentered play of discourse inspired Derrida's own meditations on language: both could agree that individual or subjective speech emanating from private consciousness had to be rethought because neither language (speaking and writing) nor being nor consciousness was private or originally proper. Thrown into language, the individual is shaped by interpretations and social forces that preclude original voice or "pure" perception and experience. The individual is always already Dasein, thrown and involved, assigned to cope by interpreting within and by écriture: neither nature nor culture has precedence over human being; neither is original. Caught up in the economy of signifiers and the inaudible play of differences, the self as ego cannot be unified or identical with itself: moreover, the psyche itself is structured like language because consciousness is constantly involved in the play of the differences of
conscious and unconscious, the "subject" situated as a lack with the Sisyphean task of articulating towards desire. Language (speech or writing) is not a transparent window for communication of meaning in an unqualified, immediate, natural, or direct manner. Écriture or language can neither represent an unmediated self nor a meaning attached to a verifiable signified idea or object. All inside-outside polarities are specious; the sign is contaminated; the psyche is ruptured as intuitive consciousness. Interpretation shapes, delimits, and intervenes in and through écriture:

There is thus no phenomenal reducing the sign or the reprezentor so that the thing signified may be allowed to know finally in the luminosity of its presence. The so-called "thing itself" is always already a representamen shielded from the simplicity of intuitive evidence. The representamen functions only by giving rise an interpretant that itself becomes a sign and so on to infinity. The self-identity of the signified conceals itself unceasingly and is always on the move. The property of the representamen is to be itself and another, to be produced as a structure of reference, to be separated from itself. The property of the representamen is not to be proper, that is to say absolutely proximate to itself. The represented is always already a representamen. 155

The Heideggerian hermeneutic circle of interpretation is implied herein; for Derrida, "extra-linguistic reality" and the inside-outside boundaries it suggests are meaningless: because we think within and by the play of signifiers
the psyche is always already engaged or contaminated with
the radical alterity or other, being-in-the-world. Derrida
claims that "the temporalization of a lived experience,"
a patently Heideggerian mode, allows the differences to
appear as such, articulating "the texts, the chains, and
the systems of traces" which are made possible by the
différence, "the unheard difference between the appearing
and the appearance."156 The insular Husserlian transcendental subject is inadequate to explain this differing-deferring necessitated and supported by the temporalization of lived experience. Adopting the Heideggerian temporality and implicitly confirming the hermeneutic circle, Derrida fails to credit Heidegger, mentioning only that "it is the problem of the deferred effect of which Freud speaks."157

Hollowed out from lived experience and temporalized
being-in-the-world, the text is severed from its quasi-
original authorial voice-consciousness, ruptured from "inte-
tentionality" and meaning. Centerless and without origin,
a field of thrown signification "in play" and inter-
textual, the text is vulnerable to appropriation and
spatialization with a center, a master trope, and a telos
affixed by a reading that represses its temporality by
assembling its signifiers as punctual, consecutive,
hierarchical, or privileged according to a pre-set scheme.
Unfolded as a linear scheme or spatialized icon of
presence, staked to a signified or "meaning," the text is
read as a history, a moment of privilege and presence, a representation of the Logos. Metaphorized and "mastered," the textuality or play of differences is repressed and emerges as the book, consumable and in-different.

This desire for presence is "born from the abyss":

The structurality or structure... has always been neutralized or reduced, and this by a process of giving it a center or referring it to a point of presence, a fixed origin. The function of this center was not only to orient, balance, and organize the structure—one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure—but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the freeplay of the structure. No doubt that by orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure permits the freeplay of its elements inside the total form... Nevertheless, the center also closes off the freeplay... Qua center, it is the point at which the substitution of contents, elements, or terms is no longer possible. At the center, the permutation or the transformation of elements is forbidden.158

The center inside implies a center outside, confirming the centered or self-present consciousness and the Signified that stands behind the "little" subject. Anxiety (Heidegger's angst?) produced by textuality and temporality or the abyss as "the repetitions, the substitutions, the transformations, and the permutations" is obliterated by the reassuring presence of the center: Derrida argues that indeed "the whole history of the concept of structure... must be thought of as a series of substitutions of center.
for center, as a linked chain of determinations of the center" which "receives different forms or names."\textsuperscript{159} Championing the logic of the abyss, Derrida proposes that the center has no "natural" locus because it is a function, "a sort of non-locus in which an infinite number of sign substitutions. . .play."\textsuperscript{160} Signifiers are not metaphysical or connected to any metaphysical essences, and the critic can no longer locate "meaning" in symbols, image patterns, or theme in the metonymies of textuality. The old metaphysical machine has broken down; as Heidegger predicted, new interpretation has always already begun and we are involved. Derrida proposes that the logic of the supplement demolishes and precludes the necessity of origin; the lack of a final word is evidence of the lack of an original Word:

\begin{quote}
If totalization no longer has any meaning, it is not because the infinity of a field cannot be covered by a finite glance or a finite discourse but because the nature of the field—that is, language and a finite language—excludes totalization. This field is in fact that of freeplay. . .a field of infinite substitutions in the closure of a finite ensemble. This field permits these infinite substitutions only because it is finite—because instead of being an inexhaustible field. . .there is something missing from it: a center which arrests and founds the freeplay of substitutions.
\end{quote}

The freeplay has a structuration, even though it is "the disruption of presence": it is "a signifying and substitutive reference inscribed in a system of differences and
the movement of a chain." ^162 This repetition and displacement, the freeplay of supplementarity and the logic of the abyss, is linked with Nietzschean joy, "affirmation of the freeplay of the world and without truth, without origin, offered to an active interpretation" akin to "Heideggerian hope." ^163 Derrida's engagement in the pursuit of hermeneutics is undeniable, for he admits that he proposes "two interpretations for interpretation":

The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering, a truth, or an origin which is free from freeplay and from the order of the sign, and lives like an exile the necessity of interpretation. The other, which is no longer turned toward the origin, affirms freeplay and tries to pass beyond man and humanism. ^164

Whichever interpretation or algebra is in play, Derrida is affirming Heideggerian questions, issues, temporality, language, and (indirectly at least) the hermeneutic circle of lived temporalizing: being-human or being text, existence is always being-written, always already interpretation, a groundless abyss. As self is always already mediate from entities, deferred from the thing itself by already being caught up in a context or thrownness that shapes interpretation, so saying or écriture is ruptured from signifieds or absolute meanings anchored in the Logos.

Naming supplementarity, "which is nothing, neither a presence nor an absence" as "the very dislocation of the proper (propre) in general," Derrida nevertheless postulates that it "makes possible all that constitutes the
property of man.\textsuperscript{165} Language is but the pleasure of endless interpretative linguistic solutions directed toward a pole of desire, also a signifier, the relationship supported by \textit{différence} or writing, a displacement and repetition, a perpetual refocusing and succession of erasures that never achieves plentitude, unity, identity, or truth. A deconstructive "methodology" approaches a text with a respect and regard for the temporality of its field of signifiers, tolerant of its ambiguities as language, and undismayed by contradictory facets of "intentionality" and "meaning." A text is a temporarily-designed measuring and interpreting of word and thing in their differences. The words or signifiers do not stand in factual representation to the entities named and related in its field, but rather play with their complementarities and differences. Vestigial evidence of organizing principles or controlling images may appear; but no predominate "I" or "eye" discovers the ultimate meaning or singular truth in the measuring-relating activity or event underway in its field of signifiers. The text invariably deconstructs or undercuts such a \textit{logos} principle: contiguous elements are not necessarily punctual and successive, and contradictory interpretations can enhance rather than destroy its mediation to the unknown, stimulating new questions but providing no final answers or paths out of its labyrinth, which is the anxiety
and responsibility of being-in-the-world. *Paradise Regained* is such a decentered text, a poem that questions itself as a supplement to the Biblical Word. It is marked by complementarity, a measuring and metonymy of differences and "an economy in which each thing exists to be displaced by its successor, which defines and annihilates it."166 Traced on the trackless desert, the groundless ground, this economy of differences lacks a unified center: the Word is under attack in *Paradise Regained*, doubled and supplemented, dismantled but constructed in play with the Other.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 2

1 Heidegger, IM, p. 30.
2 Heidegger, IM, pp. 45-46.
3 Heidegger, IM, p. 51.
4 Heidegger, IM, p. 64.
5 Heidegger, IM, p. 65.
6 Heidegger, IM, p. 74.
7 Heidegger, IM, p. 79.
8 Heidegger, IM, p. 134.
10 Heidegger, IM, p. 171.


Magliola, p. 69.

Magliola, pp. 69-70.

Magliola, p. 71.

Magliola, p. 72.

Magliola, p. 74.

Magliola, p. 77.

Magliola, p. 79.

Magliola, pp. 87; 89; 90.

Magliola, pp. 187; 189.

60 White, p. 27.

61 White, p. 28.

62 White, pp. 28-29.

63 White, p. 30.

64 White, p. 34.

65 White, p. 38.

66 White, pp. 57-58.

67 White, p. 61.

68 White, p. 69.

69 White, p. 70.

70 White, p. 75.

71 White, p. 87.

72 White, p. 88.

73 White, p. 89.

74 White, pp. 95-113.

75 White, p. 119.

76 White, p. 127.

77 White, p. 135.

78 White, pp. 162; 163.
White, p. 165.

White, p. 166.

White, p. 167.

White, p. 173.

White, p. 172.

White, pp. 176; 177.


"Introduction," DT, p. 15.


"Introduction," DT, pp. 24-25.

"Introduction," DT, p. 25.


"Introduction," DT, p. 34.


"Introduction," WCT, p. x.

"Introduction," WCT, p. xi.

"Introduction," WCT, p. xii.

White, p. 186.
98White, p. 199.

99White, p. 206.


102Luijpen, p. 32.


104Luijpen, p. 85.

105Delovia, p. 36.

106Delovia, p. 38.


112 Luijpen and Koren, p. 64.


114 Luijpen and Koren, pp. 108; 129.

115 Gras, p. 4.


120 Lingis, p. 278.

121 Lingis, p. 279.

122 Lingis, p. 282.


139 "Ends of Man," pp. 45; 48.

140 "Ends of Man," p. 49.

141 "Ends of Man," p. 50.

142 "Ends of Man," p. 51.


146 "Positions," p. 41.

147 "Positions," p. 41.


150 Grammatology, p. 23.

151 See especially pp. xvii; xviii; xxxii; xlv; xlix; l.

152 Grammatology, p. 70.

153 Grammatology, p. 71.

154 Grammatology, pp. 71-72.
155 Grammatology, pp. 49-50.

156 Grammatology, p. 65.

157 Grammatology, p. 67.


165 Grammatology, p. 244.

Chapter 3

PARADISE REGAINED AND
POST-MODERN POETICS

Aiming to project and discover the identity and horizons of Milton's \textit{Paradise Regained}, especially the possibilities nascent in its forestructure or nexus of interrelated signifiers, the post-modern critic must take up a stance against past criticism and interpretation or "misreadings" of the poem's identity and potential. Constantly changing with the aid of added critical differences, the "facts" of the work are really its \textit{facets}, endlessly catching the illuminations of human interpretation, intelligence, and existence. This ontological play of truth, whether Heideggerian \textit{aletheia} or Derridean \textit{jeu}, marks the parameters of the text as thrown-project, a field of human articulation and signification, a labyrinth of endless beginnings and partial "truths" which are virtually hermeneutical situations lacking an absolute or firm metaphysical ground.

Thus the "identity" of \textit{Paradise Regained}, its "text" or intentionality, is the field of interrelated signifiers established or "thrown" by Milton but in play with all subsequent interpretation, published or unpublished, spoken, taught, or thought. Instead of hearing a cacophony
of exegetical voices, each demanding recognition as arbiter of truth, the post-modern reader schooled in Heideggerian and Derridean hermeneutics can tolerate proliferating criticism and interpretation as inevitable and even preferable to consensus. All readily available elucidative data concerning Paradise Regained is constitutive of the post-modern reader's own stance, for in order to project new understanding, the "thrownness" or critical Befindlichkeit must be acknowledged and accommodated. Never innocent, the text is always already involved; the reading of it is on-the-way to understanding.

To study the historicity of Paradise Regained is to enter a web of humanist concerns and assumptions. Despite three centuries of critical interest and ingenuity, the text of Paradise Regained remains an anomaly, its identity and worth questioned, undecided, problematic. The language seems particularly resistant to form, structure, system: spatialized, its details and words mapped and analyzed into a mimetic world illustrative and representative of certain correspondences to truth, the poem fails. The critical problems and issues surrounding the forestructure of the poem can be classified for heuristic purposes into various areas. In general, however, Paradise Regained has been mediated and made over into a world with a design and a center, spatialized and frozen into a dramatic mold or picture-book, and assimilated into
one critical tradition or another. The unspoken scandal of its ugly poetry is barely acknowledged and is generally covered over by Milton scholars and critics: to deconstruct this precedent is to deconstruct the entire textuality of the criticism, the spatialized idealized icons constructed and worshipped by conscientious humanists and scholars of Milton's art. To discover the temporality of the poem, to de-spatialize its language, is to face the aesthetic failure and disappointment, the ugly asymmetry, the vacuum of power, the puzzle and doubt of Paradise Regained that makes the text seemingly deconstruct its own title and purported identity and intention.

Paramount among the critical problems and issues discussed by the critics is the vexing concern of the form of the poem. Early contemporary scholars like Milton's credible pupil Ellwood assumed that it was a sequel or afterthought to Paradise Lost, a "brief" epic.¹ Most eighteenth-century commentators judged the poem "much inferior" to the grand epic, although they acknowledged the puzzling fact that Milton's own favorite was Paradise Regained.² Romantics Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, Shelley, DeQuincey, Byron, and Lander rescued the poem's reputation, praising its excellence of execution and claiming that it surpassed Paradise Lost; Blake contributed at least twelve illustrations, moved by its scenes of meditation and psychological tension. From the
late nineteenth-century until the first World War, commentators on the poem neglected its formal considerations, preferring to discuss the temptations as an autobiographical expression of his personal theological opinions and inner conflicts concerning the value of classical learning and worldly fame. However, as the New Criticism gained ground in scholarly and academic circles, interest grew in particular "scenes" as structural elements of the poem, which in turn began to assume the proportions of a drama with holistic action, viable characterization and dramatic tension, including catharsis. Adherents to the opinion that the poem is an epic or at least a Christian allegory with an epic hero continued to voice strong opposition to this trend emphasizing its drama; in addition, many Miltonists were still primarily interested in the poem as a theological tract.

Gradually, however, spatializing the language of the poem and examining its segments, scenes, and speeches as structural components gained precedence over other methodologies, including theological and autobiographical considerations, and many different designs or schemes appeared using this argument. Studies of imagery patterns and structural matrices or themes as structural components also surfaced. In particular, the individual epic similes in the poem were scissored from the text and given special
study and consideration as epic units. As an architectonic edifice, an epic or dramatic machine, the poem was easily schematized: examined as an Aristotelian drama dominated by the neoclassical unities, its major characters or combatants could be analyzed as psychological case histories caught in a dramatic situation. In general, and not unexpectedly, Satan's role drew considerable and varied comment and interest; whereas Christ's character and quiescent demeanor was considered lackluster and undramatic in comparison. A major stumbling block for critics who concerned themselves with Christ's character was the question of his knowledge and divine nature appended to his human nature, a theological problem that has devastating aesthetic repercussions.

Recently, the language of the poem has been rediscovered by critics, who have managed to throw new light on the stylistics, examining the form of the poem as a field of signifiers rather than a spatial structure or static object isolated from time and existence. Observers disillusioned with spatializing technique who take up this new stance no longer quarrel about the boundaries of its structural units or the problem of the three or more overlapping temptations vis-à-vis its four books, and they are less concerned with genre questions or arguments for a particular form or matrix: their interest has shifted to the analysis of the dialogue, narration, and rhetoric.
of Christ, Satan, and even the Narrator-Bard. These stylistic or linguistic properties of the poem are studied as clues to the intentional mental states of the combatants and the narrator. As an ancillary development, there is less interest per se in moral judgments or theological truths, and heroic action is based on the character's rhetorical and stylistic skills, rather than his actions as a hero. As a result, Christ's character has gained in heroic stature, or his failure to act heroically has always cost him heroic stance in the eyes of earlier critics. An interest in the double-time scheme and opposing views of time and history between the poem's combatants has also had the effect of raising Christ's heroic stature: critics can excuse his failure to act as consonant with his Christian virtue as supreme patience, refusing to act because his time and view of history is based on divine knowledge of God's plan for human beings.

What can a post-modern theory of poetics add to our understanding, reading, and appreciation of Milton's *Paradise Regained*? Can Heidegger's meditations on Being and language settle any of these critical issues and problems of interpretation? Obviously, Milton had never heard of existential thought; but as human Dasein thrown into a particular historical situation with certain choices to appropriate he was, like all humans, faced with the prospect of making sense and use of being; as an
artist, he was bound to evoke and capture existential drama in his artworks, exploring ontological moods and ways of being-in-the-world, especially the problem of ways of being-toward-death. His Adam and Eve are faced with coming to grips with the new prospect of death when they set out into the world, hand-in-hand, at the end of *Paradise Lost*; and his blind hero in *Samson Agonistes* ultimately takes up death as the primary possibility.

Wandering in the desert, solitary and perplexed, the Christ of *Paradise Regained* is engaged in pondering the "uncanniness" or meaning of his being or existence, especially his mission or being-with others and his death. A good case for a purely Heideggerian reading of the poem could be made: as *Dasein*, being-there as receptive and alert to world-disclosure, Christ finds himself thrown into the world, faced with a certain facticity and horizon of possibilities as an entity inquiring into its own being. His *Befindlichkeit* is traced and retraced by disparate repetitious voices in the first section or "book" of the poem: the poet, Satan, and God the Father add fragments or refrains that draw on fragments or texts of the Old and New Testaments, *Paradise Lost*, and several Renaissance Christiads. Fleeing everydayness or familiar everyday routine, deserting popular tradition and opinion, Christ is seeking his authenticity or being-in-the-world. The Son has created
the world; but as incarnated, he is human or Dasein, and is responsible for authentic self-actualization. Thus his quest in the desert is far more than a search for identity: Christ's Dasein is an aporia of Being, human and divine. Signifying both natures and both manifestations of the Law, Old Testament and New Covenant, he has taken on human incarnated subjectivity, intentionality, and consciousness, the existential burden of free choice that shapes not only his personal existence but the entire history and scope of Being and creation. As the Word made flesh, he is destined to reinterpret Being. Deserting the old ground, he has departed into the trackless and uncharted wilderness, an openness to re-mark and re-measure.

Searching for his origins, Jesus is clearly in an unusual mood as he separates himself from the everyday sights and sounds of Bethabara:

Musing and much revolving in his breast,  
How best the mighty work he might begin  
Of Savior to mankind, and which way first  
Publish his Godlike office now mature,  
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,  
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse,  
With solitude, till far from tack of men,  
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,  
He enter'd now the bordering Desert wild...  
(I: 11.185-193)

That the mood is not merely psychological is evident: Jesus is reviewing his life from earliest memory, owning up to who he is, highlighting the major choices and decisions that have shaped his horizons and led him to
his state of mind or Befindlichkeit, the ontological predicament to which he is assigned. In the grip of une-
canniness or anxiety (Angst), he embarks on the temporal stretching-ahead or seeking of new possibility:

O What a multitude of thoughts at once
Awak'n'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd.
(I: 11. 196-200)

Even as a child, Jesus had been a serious scholar, he muses, self-conscious about his being: "myself I thought / Born to that end, born to promote all truth"
(I: 11. 204-205). Rejecting military violence and power, "victorious deeds" and "heroic acts" (I: 215; 216), the youthful Christ has chosen language, "winning words to conquer willing hearts" (I: 1.222). Language, "more humane, more heavenly" I: 221), brings God and man to-gether in new measures and relationship. Remembering his mother's memories of prophecies fulfilled, a segment of the text which repeats and supplements the foregoing texts of the poet. Satan, and God the Father, Christ adds and repeats some of these details of his past: the effect is a tracing and retracing of the same experiences, fragments and metonymies shaped and reshaped to formulate a history or facticity for Christ's "thrownness" up to the departure into the desert. With the sense of this "Authority... deriv'd from Heaven" (I: 289), Christ feels led into the
wilderness, assigned to study and interpret the situation allotted to him, resolved only to temporalize with "openness to the mystery" or waiting upon the disclosure of possibilities. Clearly, his state-of-mind is ek-static, a stretching-ahead issuing from the past but encompassing the future in the same motion: "with such thoughts / Accompanied of things past and to come / Lodg'd in his breast" (I: 11. 299-301).

Engaged in this open meditative thinking or Gelassenheit, the Dasein of Christ encounters the temptation of falling or the indifferent being of the They (Das Man), in the ultimate rationalist and metaphysical thinker, Satan, who has been dealing with an anxiety of a different sort, "dread attending when that fatal wound / Shall be inflicted by the Seed of Eve / upon my head" (I: 11. 53-55), a "dreaded Time" (I: 58).

For Satan, who is unwilling to think the phenomenological reduction or origins of being, being-in-the-world is simplified into cogito and res extensa: believing that his power and being are self-generated and self-perpetuating, Satan is a demonic Cartesian denying any save the most rudimentary existence to that which is other or present-at-hand. Deliberately alienated from all other existents as objects represented and therefore controlled and manipulated by himself, Satan conceives of himself as
the center, a demonic Signified through which all entities are measured, related, and given presence by the lying word. Convinced that he enjoys full presence and unity, needing no difference, Satan has ignored the interdependence of past-present-future, preferring to believe that the moments of the present are identical, successive, unending, indifferent—like himself. His gnawing dread is the possibility of difference from himself, a difference which is gradually unconcealed in the being-in-the-world of Christ's Dasein, a state which is attacked and de-centered by Satan, who attempts to replace or supplement it with his own, characterized by mere curiosity, idle talk, and ambiguous rhetoric. Satan cannot face the abyss or no-thing of patient Gelassenheit, so he remains in the inauthentic mode, his will-to-power creating in-authentic empty illusions and representational world-pictures that help him maintain the fiction of self-presence and control, immortality and indifference to existential choice. The world is a mirroring of self for Satan, a collection of things metonymically named and manipulated by himself so that he can feel powerful by exercising his representational capacities, ignoring the absences behind the glittering facades. Each temptation is an attempt to lure Christ away from his Gelassenheit and existential quest.
Approaching Christ for his first try, he asks Christ to turn the stones into bread to satisfy his "curious eye" (I: 319) and others who "curious are to hear" (I: 333). The request for the miracle is idle talk, an idle curiosity rooted in the manipulation of matter and form, a scientific or technological perspective. But Christ refuses to manipulate and re-arrange the matter and form of the natural entity, choosing instead to stress interpretation, what is "written" as "each Word / Proceeding from the mouth of God" (I: 1. 347; 11. 349-350). Eschewing "distrust," Jesus is resolved to let the entities of the world be as shown by the will and word of God: the entities are his trace, which must be properly interpreted as such and "let be" in the spirit of Gelassenheit. Enfuriated, Satan boasts of his own power and domination over the forms and matter of the world; but his attitude is marked by the misuse of words as a collection of signifiers or things to be manipulated also, Christ points out. Moreover, he extends his attitude of Gelassenheit to the fiend himself "with unalter'd brow":

Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope, I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'st Permission from above. (I: 11. 493-496)

Serving as human foils to Christ are his disciples Andrew and Simon, who fall into doubt because they are surrounded by the everyday, familiar secular society that shows impatience for material control of the world, rather than
Gelassenheit.

Continuing his "holiest meditation" in the second book of the poem, Christ does begin to feel hungry; but he refuses to disturb the natural order, preferring to bear it with patient endurance: Christ uses his body as a system of access or openness onto the world, not as an object alienated and apart from his conscious relating and interpreting. Satan, who has been consulting with the other devils concerning the exploitation of means to tempt Christ from his purpose, does disturb the natural order, creating the illusion of the pleasant grove (II: 11. 289-297) and a false banquet of unclean meats and delicacies (II: 11. 339-367). Rather than relying on Christ's possible miraculous powers, Satan begins to produce his own artistic creations: if he can manage to entrap Christ's attention and imagination into admiration or involvement with the artistic illusions or representations, perhaps Christ will abandon his search to enter the timeless care-less satisfaction promised in them. If Satan can persuade Christ to abandon the burden of responsible individual choices and responsible use of time for self-actualization so that Christ will interpret the world as a collection of objects present-at-hand to be manipulated and controlled for personal will-to-power, Satan's own dread of difference will be alleviated, allowing him to resume the comfortable, satisfied self-deceptions.
His invitation that Christ "sit down and eat" (II: 377) is more than a simple enticement: Satan is urging Christ to interpret the world as a cornucopia of unending delights, to live quite literally in a fool's paradise protected from risk and time. Thus Christ is tempted to "kill time," forgetting his destiny and refusing death, to enter into the inauthentic mode of the They, a thoughtless existence taken up with the cares and pleasures of the world, forgetting his individual finitude.

Whereas Satan interprets sensual gratification, wealth, and power as evidence of self-presence and tools for control, Christ counters with a different interpretation:

Extol not Riches then, the toil of Fools,
The wise man's cumbrance if not snare. . .
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, Desires, and Fears, is more a King,
Which every wise and virtuous man attains:
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong Multitudes,
Subject himself to Anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves. . .
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a Scepter, ofttest better miss't.
(II: 453-454; 466-472; 484-486)

Thunderstruck by Christ's strategic reinterpretation and refutation of his self-image, personal value system, and ontological core or mode of being-in-the-world, Satan appears to make a genuine effort to understand the new mode whose horizon has been "laid out" alongside his own: congratulating Christ on his wisdom, Satan interprets this
response as additional evidence of Christ's leadership potential (presumably as one of Satan's own minions).

Accordingly, he urges Jesus to cultivate his gifts for fame and glory, manipulating his subjects with rhetorical skill (III: 11. 7-42). Deliberately drawing a parallel to his previous rejection of wealth and sensual pleasures, Christ refuses fame and glory, but on his own terms, offering his own interpretive framework:

But if there be in glory ought of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance; I mention still,
Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly borne,
Made famous in a hand and times obscure;
Who names not now with honor patient Job?
By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing
For truth's sake suffering death unjust,
lives now
Equal in fame to proudest Conquerors. . . .
(III: 11. 88-99)

He continues, "I seek not mine, but his / Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am" (III: 11. 106-107). This constant revision and reinterpretation on his own terms is Christ's continual strategy throughout the rest of the poem. Every center posited by Satan is deconstructed and reinterpreted.

In the third and fourth sections of the poem, their intersubjective discourse twists and turns in the Heideggerian hermeneutic circling movement, interpretation built atop interpretation not in the architectural metaphor of spatial construction, but rather as a labyrinth
without pattern, decentered. No single matrix, theme or trope describes or circumscribes the text of their discourse, which is a simulacrum absent of center within or without: there are no center reference points within or without to structure or pattern the text. All is hermeneutical process: not an organic structure or Neoplatonic hierarchy, not an Aristotelian drama with characters and plot, the text is an oscillating spiraling, and the three Biblical temptations are dispersed and disseminated into multiple echoes throughout. As Satan becomes dimly aware of Christ's deconstructing strategy, he tries to employ the same methodology, decentering Christ's reinterpretations, proposing alternatives compatible with his own value system and being-in-the-world. Hence the strange and perplexing overlapping and mismatching of book sections vis-a-vis the three Biblical temptations: the controversy that has arisen around this feature of the form can be explained as congruent with the constantly oscillating hermeneutic struggle in the poem. The four books or sections themselves thus do not have full presence or closure; nor is any one temptation, detail, theme or image pattern controlling and centering the poem. The trace or abyss of their differing is "grounding" the hermeneutic spiraling that perpetuates the poem, deferring its closure; no form or genre perfectly defines it either. The text of Paradise Regained, in which truth-
in-perception is always open to revision, is not structured by a bipolar opposition between Satan and Christ either: the text is constructed and de-constructed between them, and the "center" is a function, the freeplay of a doubled interpretive movement carried in the textuality. The trace, that unsayable difference that permits the difference in interpretive strategies of the combatants, "grounds" the function and the structuration of the poem. Neither has an intuitive consciousness pristine and protected from the Other: the lack in both is filled in constantly by the Other, so that their identities are formulated by the quality and frequency of intersubjectivity; their identities circulate under the chains of signifiers in mutual discourse. Using the same arguments or "facts" but interpreting them differently, the one is only the other deferred, the one differing from the other.

Continually trying to capitalize on this sameness, Satan implies that they are brothers and Sons of God with similar or identical powers and goals, but Christ persists in emphasizing the hermeneutic difference. The intersubjective discourse shapes the horizons of possibility for both; this shaping is a concatenated metonymic tracing or voicing that is not a plot line or an organic construct.

For Christ, each turning of the hermeneutic circling is a kaleidoscopic rearrangement of his authentic opportunities and possibilities: the shifting perspectives
and reinterpretations enable him to use language to shape and self-actualize his being-in-the-world as the savior of mankind and the meaning of his death in such a scenario. For Satan, the process hermeneutics is baffling, the shifting sands irritating, for by attempting to posit centers as signifiers representing self as Signified, he is continually de-centered and deconstructed himself, and his own words are turned against him as he attempts to turn the Word against himself and the divine purpose. On the other hand, Christ's passive releasement to things, his attitude of openness and releasement to the mystery of being, constantly enables him to maintain his equanimity, using the skirmishes of discourse as opportunities or challenges to self-actualize his being. Alone, he was confused, eager, and puzzled; but in verbal combat with Satan, he can work on his destiny.

Seizing upon Christ's reference to his Father at the beginning of the third section of the poem, Satan shows that he, too, has been learning through his contact with the radically Other. More clever now in the ways of hermeneutics, he argues that the Father actually "seeks glory" from his creation (III: 1. 110) and is accorded glory by angels, men, and all being, "Promiscuous from all Nations, Jew or Creek / Or Barbarous..." (III: 110-111), Satan is attempting to capitalize on Christ's own declaration that he seeks not his own glory, but the glory to
the Father. But Christ immediately reinterprets Satan's stance and reinforces his own by pointing out that giving glory to God is indeed in one's self-interest, since "That who advance his glory, not their own / Then he himself to glory will advance" (III: 143-144). This answer forces Satan to face his own ontological condition: he realizes that the calculating cogito pose has actually undermined his own advancement. He stands "struck / With guilt of his own sin, for he himself / Insatiable of glory had lost all" (III: 146-148).

His next attack is still the same method, however. Taking scriptural evidence and cues, he argues that Jesus should seize power immediately to improve the condition of the world:

The Prophets of old, who sung thy endless reign,
The happier reign the sooner it begins. Reign then; what canst thou better do the whole? (III: 178-180)

Jesus' answer is again a repetition of his will to release-ment or Gelassenheit; moreover he manages to turn Satan's own words against him again:

But what concerns it thee when I begin My everlasting Kingdom? Why art thou Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition? Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall And my promotion will be thy destruction? (III: 198-202)

Covering a chilling despair with haughty bravado, Satan manages to use this thrust to his advantage:
Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace; what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear;
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst; worst is my Port. . .
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd,
And will alike be punish'd; whether thou
Reign or reign not. . .
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why more thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest both to thyself and all the world,
That thou who worthiest art should'st be thir
King? (III: 204-209; 212-215; 223-226)

Deciding, however, that discussion is less effective
than he had hoped, Satan determines to show an iconographi-
cal representation of the power, glories, and riches of the
kingdoms of the world. This massive effort is usually
designated as the Second Temptation; but obviously, as any
examination of the interpolated conversation between the
episodes will show, the individual temptations are ongoing
and constant. In this impressive panoramic display, an
artistic mimetic illusion purporting to offer a presence
that is really an absence, Satan proposes an escape from
angst and existential choices. Instead, he offers a choice
that would end all choicemaking, and builds up a wealth of
metonymic detail, entities, and individual signifiers meant
to be interpreted as displacements and repetitions of
Satan's own self-centering. The cataloguing reflects
Satan's characteristic mode of being-toward things and
individuals in the world merely as a collection of objects
for manipulation and personal aggrandizement or satis-
faction. The temptation of the kingdoms is a repetition
and substitution or supplement to the banquet episode; both are spatializing of rhetoric, turning chains of signifiers and language into world-pictures meant to promise self-presence and complete satisfaction that needs no difference, no Other to disturb the unity of self-presence.

Again, Satan fails to convince and is de-centered: the absence behind the metaphysical representation is exposed by Christ's remark that this is "argument / Of human weakness rather than of strength" (III: 1. 402). In rejecting the promise and vision of plentitude, Christ emphasizes once again the importance of "waiting upon" or Gelassenheit: "My time I told thee. . .is not yet come" (III: 396-397).

His elaborate pictorial strategem of military might and pageantry failed, Satan began to realize that his hermeneutic has met "over-match" at the beginning of the fourth and last section of the poem:

So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not 0 er though desperate of success
And vain importunity pursues.

(IV: 11. 21-24)

Breaking his awkward silence and pending despair with a repetition of his kingdoms plan, he prepares a substitute, engineering a Weltbild or panorama of Roman culture and wealth in which he uses the solidity of architecture as a
center to anchor the magnificence and achievement of Roman law and culture, promising stability and permanence in life. The implication is, of course, a direct challenge to living life with the risk and possibility of authentic temporalizing. In offering this Weltbild of the comforts, power, treasures, and pleasures of earth and culture, Satan is implying that, if Christ is divine, he can forego human being-towards death, choosing to live forever in a comfortable suspended state of existence free from pain, infirmity, and trouble. Satan promises that each moment can be full in itself, and that consecutive moments of such plentitude and satisfaction can cover over the need for risk or painful choices and finitude. The removal or covering-over of the possibility of one's own death covers over the need for self-actualizing; as Heidegger stresses, the knowledge of one's own death forces and enables Dasein to make responsible choices in order to realize one's special roles, talents, and individual resources and contributions. The possibility of death makes individual differences possible; without personal death, everyone would be like everyone else, for all choices would be available for all individuals all of the moments of time. To acknowledge the possibility and finality of one's death is to become free to make meaningful choices about one's existence. Christ appears to be aware of this ontological condition, and rejects the Roman culture, pinning his
rejection significantly on the "tedious waste of time" (IV: 1. 123) involved. Such a life of luxury and careless existence is "degenerate" and "enslav'd" (IV: 1. 144). Christ will not rescue the masses who allow themselves to be so entrapped, and ends his speech by hinting that no artistic representation or image can adequately signify the heavenly kingdom:

Know therefore when my season comes to sit
On David's Throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the Earth,
Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world,
And of my Kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this, but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.
(IV: 11. 146-153)

While Satan can grasp that no-thing will satisfy or tempt Christ, he fails to interpret the nuances of this discovery appropriately: "Nothing will please the difficult and nice / Or nothing more than still to contradict" (IV: 11. 157-158). Instead, he prefers to think that the visions of military might and cultural splendor are meant to be supreme signifiers of his own solid self-presence as transcendental Signified or center:

All these which in a moment thou behold'st
The kingdoms of the world to thee I give;
For giv'n to me, I give to whom I please,
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior Lord.
(IV: 11. 162-167)

Imperviously spurring this mode of interpretation once more, Christ again offers the wise passiveness of
Gelassenheit:

I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less,
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
Th' abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou hast permission on me.
(IV: 171-175)

Chiding Satan for setting himself up as the center Signified of the cosmological system of creation, Christ also reveals that the discourse of the temptations has increased his own knowledge and understanding of Satan's habits of interpretation: "Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st / That Evil one, Satan forever damn'd" (IV: 193-194).

Although Satan appears to be somewhat startled or intimidated by this rebuke, even admitting that the kingdoms of the world are "transitory" (IV: 1. 209), he proposes to repeat his efforts, substituting another signifying Weltbild. Reviewing once again Christ’s facticity or childhood experiences, he recalls the learned disputations Christ had as a boy with the elders in the Temple: "Be famous then / By wisdom," he urges, "as thy Empire must extend / So let extend thy mind o'er all the world / In knowledge, all things in it comprehend" (IV: 221-224).

As a signifier and commodity of self-presence, wisdom is Satan's new equipment, which he quantifies as if it could be represented as a collection of things or essences, Platonic ideals or signifieds of the Logos as himself. In
addition, he produces and orchestrates yet another artistic vision or _eidolon_ of celestial bliss, an atemporal realm of the mind described sensually:

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Where on the Aegean shore a City stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens, the eye of Greece, Mother of Arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable in her sweet recess,
City or Suburban, studious walks and shades. . . .
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(IV: 11. 237-243)

Creating flowing chains of signifiers, Satan paints a mimetic idealization or allegory of intellectualized abstraction and clichés of the life of the mind. Piling up details, spatializing his rhetoric into a verbal architecture, Satan attempts to use Christ's inner, mental paradise as a center for self-presence:

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These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a Kingdom's weight;
These rules will render thee a King complete
Within thyself, much more with Empire join'd.
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(IV: 11. 281-284)

Again, this new center proposed is re-interpreted and re-written by Christ, who replies that he has no need of wisdom, since "he who receives / Light from above, from the fountain of light / No other doctrine needs" (IV: 288-290). Furthermore, he notes that Socrates himself did not boast of wisdom, and other Greek philosophers "next to fabling fell and smooth conceits," "doubted all things, though plain sense," fell into corporeal pleasures, or became mired in "Philosophic pride" (IV: 11. 293-300). This seemingly virulent attack on learning and intellectual
pursuits has, of course, caused an unending storm of comment that has never been resolved:

Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead;
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the Soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogant, to God give none,
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not, or be delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,

Addressing the intellectual, Christ cautions:

who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior. . .
Uncertain and unsettl'd still remains,
Deep verst in books and shallow him himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.

(IV: 322-330)

Christ is reinterpreting learning and wisdom gained in books and philosophy as non-quantifiable, but rather useful as integrated into personal decisions and options. His attack on Greek poetry is probably motivated by the same considerations, although it is exceptionally harsh.

Frustrated with the failure of each temptation in the chain of repetitions and supplements, Satan next tries to shake Christ's Gelassenheit with a fierce storm; but, as Dick Taylor has suggested, this too is a temptation that fails. Desperate because Christ stands "Proof against all temptation as a rock / Of Adamant, and as a Center, firm,"
Satan demands that Christ recognize in himself a doubled center, a mirror image:

I thought thee worthy my nearer view
And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bear no single sense.
The Son of God I also am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd.
(IV: 11. 514-521)

Accordingly, he carries Christ to the pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem, the center of the holy city and Jewish worship. Again using an architectural edifice to suggest a real presence and the massive weight of custom and law (as he did in the temptation of the kingdoms, Roman culture), Satan demands:

There stand, if thou stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's House
Have brought thee, and highest plac't,
highest is best
Now show thy Progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down, safely if Son of God:
For it is written, he will give command
Concerning thee to his Angels, in thir hands
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.
(IV: 551-559)

Attempting to use the Temple architecture as a signifier for the word of the Law, the letter of the Law, Satan is also trying to stage an elaborate iconographical marvel, Christ the Incarnate Word centered and fully present in all his glory at the pinnacle of the Temple, the seat of the letter and spirit of the Law. He is demanding that Christ double the authority of the Father in himself if
he is divine. If Christ cooperates to satisfy Satan's curiosity, his human nature and possibilities will be arrested, removing him from human risks and problems. Thus this temptation too is a repetition, a substitution, a displacement of Satan's desire to cover-over Christ's human nature in some way.

Using the scriptural word to dislodge and challenge Satan's distortion or emendations of scripture and prophecy, Christ supplements and deconstructs at one blow: "Also it is written / Tempt not the Lord thy God," and stands (IV: 560-561). Adding and differing, Christ's interpretation is a warning that he refuses to act as a personal signifier in the equation Satan has constructed. While he is the Temple of the Lord, the Word of the Law, Christ refuses to cover over his human nature and incarnation in order to be identified as the Signifier of the Father. Rather, he chooses to remain Dasein, being-in-the-world assigned to make meaningful choices. Accepting the possibility of his human death, refusing to be equated and involved with the immortality of the Father, Christ is choosing to affirm and accept his human nature and finitude. His "waiting upon" enables Christ to stand in "anticipatory resoluteness" for the shaping of his life in and through time and other human Daseins. Christ "wins" the battle of Paradise Regained by his use of the deconstructive strategy, deconstructing Satan's words and
faulty interpretations, rather than performing miracles: breaking up each of Satan's arguments, Christ reinterprets without positing a new center, supplementing and differing with scripture, the Word written. In this entangling or intertextuality with Satan's interpretations, Christ manages to use each of Satan's efforts to expand his self-understanding, the horizon of his own possibilities.

Neither character is the focus or center of the poem; rather, the doubling of the language, similar but different every time, consistently posits a "lack" or vacuum of power or focus, a functioning.

Long debated by scholars of the poem, Christ's deficiencies in heroic action and speech are flaws only if the poem is squeezed into the generic mold of epic, brief epic, or drama. Satan is the artist, the poet of the piece, who manufactures and manipulates chains of signifiers which he attempts to spatialize into representations, artistic images. Christ's laconic language is ugly, stark, and unadorned in comparison, plain and unpretentious at best: at certain awkward stages in the text, the Word is virtually wordless, compared to the Father of lies. The two combatants have different philosophies of language, different strategies for bringing word and thing into relation, because they interpret Being differently. Christ uses signs to dismantle Satan's centered systems, but posits none of his own; the process of hermeneutical
interpretation is, for Christ, the strategy for uncovering the system of horizons potentially contained in each engagement with Satan, the Other. For Satan, each deconstruction is a "mathetic" circle, characterized by negativity, because his expectations and projections are rolled back so that he must completely reconstruct his own position, rather than moving forward: he gains no hermeneutical ground, uncovers no new system of horizons as Christ does in the entanglements. Explaining this structure of hermeneutic experience, Gunther Buck says:

> It is only what is strange and odd and at first sight seems unintelligible about the other view as a whole, not just particular elements of it, that breaks the reflective self-preoccupation of the expository preconceptions that immediately set in. The reconstruction of the expository horizon will in practice take the form of an assimilation on the interpreter's own horizon. . . . to that of the object of interpretation. Gadamer has described this process as a "merging of horizons" and proposed. . . . the thesis that the interpreter and his object are elements of the same objective interconnection in a historical sequence of effects. 13

From another viewpoint, Christ is in the position of Habermas' psychoanalyst, who lays bare the repressed unconscious motives in the strategy of depth hermeneutic: Satan's compulsive behavior is constantly exposed and explained in the deconstructions imposed by Christ:

> The unconsciousness of the motive has no essential epistemological significance, apart from the fact that the motive cannot be actualized without the help of the
therapist and that, once made conscious, it decisively alters the past and future life history of the patient.\textsuperscript{14}

Satan is in the analogous position of the captive analysand, suffering from the frustration of what Lacan has termed "le fadon," the phenomenon that presence is always deferred, always where we are not:

The motive's having-become-unconscious, its teleologically engineered elimination from "consciousness," does not hamper its efficacy; it strengthens and modifies the latter in a highly traceable way; it brings about the compulsive character of behavior and the suffering from this. The self-reflection introduced by the therapist, the recollection of the motive, can therefore be a process of learning and education only in the form of a therapy. To become self-conscious, in what has previously been at work unconsciously, here means to break a spell, to be rid of affliction under the burden of a bad history, through the analytical realization and rectification of this history.\textsuperscript{15}

Intuitive reflection is but one aspect of becoming-conscious, which always occurs in a practical situation when "the interpreter, in appropriating an alien horizon, is always at the same time having an experience of himself," Buck adds.\textsuperscript{16} Even practical situations and concomitant discourse never reveal completely; the inexplicit is always covered-up, mute and not yet interpreted: neither Christ nor Satan can fully control the process of becoming-conscious through their intersubjective discourse, the play of their interpretive horizons. Their "reading"
and "writing" of one another and self accrue so that text is erased and effaced, but used as pretext for another supplemented or substituted text, which in turn undergoes the same process. Dividing the words and voice of scripture, the sacred word, against itself, the two combatants generate texts very close yet different, stirring up and exposing forgotten or sedimented, inexplicit strata as pretexts for new interpretation. In the repetition of selected elements of the pretext, the critic sets in motion the difference: first Christ, then later Satan manage to use this strategy to disorient with an added chain of signifiers that destabilize and decenter. The technique of this redoublement becomes so prominent (or hidden) that the text appears to take over its own self-judging and self-reflecting, a mulling or recycling of self with which Christ began the sequence: a pretext or false origin itself, taken over and repeated by the textuality of the text, its signifiers broken from a center in freeplay, the text is a palimpsest, a metatext. No meaning is necessarily communicated where any one interpretation that asserts its pertinence simultaneously allows itself to be put into question. The metatext of Paradise Regained is a field of forces in play, a Gestalt or intertextuality, rather than a static organic structure; it shows an irreducible plurality, a logic not comprehensive but built metonymically with associations,
contiguities, cross-references, a serialization of displacement, overlapping, difference: the thrown-project of the text of *Paradise Regained*, the unexpected shifts and disruptions, undercut its logocentric status.

Because Milton was very conscious that he was himself always supplementing the Word, using Biblical events, situations, and characters, the language of his poetry is bound to break the semantic bonds and horizons of theology. For *Paradise Regained*, Milton used three Gospel texts—Luke, Matthew, and Mark—to cull situation, event, characters; his unique contribution or supplement consists in the linguistic and hermeneutic construction or argumentation. This aspect of *Paradise Regained* can be considered its Heideggerian "earth." Even the Biblical word is, of course, ultimately a palimpsest of tracings, erasures, texts and pretexts, multiple authorless voices, writing, or intertextuality different and distant from its purported Divine Signified, whose existence depends on faith anyway. As imaginative substitute and supplement, how does Milton's poem repeat the Biblical pretext with a difference, setting in motion the difference to expose the inexplicit or sedimented meanings, destabilizing and de-centering the Biblical word with its redoublment?

Discussing the illusion of presence of the literary or poetic signifier, Murray Krieger has highlighted as "word-magic" the theory or philosophy of language that
seems to imbue much Renaissance literary art, including

**Paradise Regained:**

This magical notion thrives on an inter-illumination, an inter-referentiality, among words, emblems, concepts, and things—not only mutualities and identities among them but also within emblems, within words, within concepts, and within things. It represents a naive confidence in signs which, substantially filled, turn into things as well as signs. Or, to put it more precisely, signs turn reflexive and become, in effect, things themselves, things which continually overrun their bounds and change their natures. . . . All things can be allegories of one another in one grand dance of mutuality between microcosm and macrocosm.  

Arguing that mimesis or re-presentation is not so crucial in the Renaissance consciousness as presentation, which "suggests that the signified itself is imported bodily into the signifier as a presence," Krieger states that his avowed purpose is to understand and demonstrate that poems have a methodology whereby "each confronts the emptiness of words as signifiers--their distance from their signifieds--and, having thus confronted that emptiness and that distance, converts itself into an invocation of presence that becomes itself a verbal presence." This "demystified awareness" would avoid the naive reification of the poem as an object liberated from the consciousness of its creator, but would also "concern itself with that fixed spatial configuration of words on paper...without ontologizing it into a static idol which would freeze into itself the humanly and empirically vibrant forms." As
demystified mimesis, these simulacra are "worlds in motion, reflecting the diachronic character of verbal sequence and experiential flow,\textsuperscript{21} and without universal archetypes or Platonic essences to act as signifieds, such a world is "a microcosm without a macrocosm behind it."\textsuperscript{22} A "white" metaphor, the demystified poem shelters a metonymy of differences:

The poem's trick of being at once self-authenticating and self-abnegating enables it to proclaim an identity between itself as metaphor and its reality, a collapsing of the binary oppositions between signifier and signified, and yet enables it at the same time to undercut its pretensions by reasserting its distance from an excluded "real world."\textsuperscript{23}

Calling the poem "metonymic metaphor" and "microlangue," he would protect it from the general play of écriture:

What I have said earlier about the poem as intentional microlangue... bestows upon it the power, under the conditions of aesthetic illusion, to create a presence in the verbal sequence that does cut it off from the absences inherent in the nature of language generally. The signifier, which is seen as struggling against its nature to create the signified it contains, seems to have forced its god into itself and thus to have become fully substantiated. It is this fullness which creates the illusion of a self-sufficiency that justifies our treating the parole as its own langue.\textsuperscript{24}

Still working within the framework of the Heideggerian problem of identity and difference (which influences Derrida), and having explained the mechanics of illusionary presence in the microlangue, Krieger turns to the
element of difference or metonymy, the "polarity" in the microlangue:

I mean only the extreme form of difference, the logical consequences of the mutual exclusion between differential elements which turn then into binary oppositions. As mutually dependent as they are mutually exclusive, they undergo their will-o'-the-wisp transformations, leaving us unable to take our eye off either of them without losing the other.\(^\text{25}\)

The bipolarities of poetic metaphor "are to be seen as at once opposite, reversible, identical":

These multiple views, mutually contradictory and yet simultaneously sustained are permitted by the special character of fictional illusion, with its strangely duplicitous appearances and "realities."\(^\text{26}\)

Common sense meanings oscillate with "fully embodied metaphor"; the language of the poem seems empty and full, present and absent, simultaneously: such is the miraculous identity and difference of the microlangue or metonymic metaphor. For the deconstructionists, Krieger concedes that there is not \underline{aufhebung}; for the humanists and New Critics, the poem is at least the promise or illusion of presence or aesthetic object. Krieger contends that Renaissance poets characteristically "take over and secularize Christian Neoplatonic paradoxes of divinity in humanity, spirit in materiality, unity in division," so that poetry replaces metaphysics.\(^\text{27}\) Moreover, he suggests: "Perhaps the most fascinating literary works in our tradition are those which recapitulate these teasing powers
of metaphor and thereby become allegories of the metaphorical process itself. 28

Paradise Regained is such a microlangue or metonymic metaphor, an imaginative substitute and supplement to the New Testament Word of God: Milton adds the deconstructive hermeneutic to the bare temptation narrative of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, braiding and unbraiding the text with the metonymic differences of Christ and Satan brought together and held together in the verbal space of the poem, the blankness of the desert. The temptations are themselves metonymic displacements of Satan's unconscious and thus repressed desire:

The metonymic movement that will not allow the emergence of the repressed desire into the consciousness nevertheless expresses that desire through the movement from signifier to signifier as a form of voracious consumption, a repression of a fundamental psychic need seeking fulfillment, which in turn is both promised and deferred by the diacritical nature of the signifying system itself. 29

Although Satan tries to interrupt the metonymic sequence, attempting to force Christ to name himself in his full power and self-presence as a signifier identical with the Absent Father, Christ refuses to choose a symbolic or spatial iconographical identity. Nor does the poem assume a spatial symbolic identity: its ironic verbal presence admits the differences, the duality of horizons laid out by Christ and Satan.
The identity and difference established and held into relation by the metonymic metaphor or microlangue of *Paradise Regained* is thus a "semantic event that takes place at the point where several semantic fields intersect." Both strategies of interpretation are presented so faithfully (even though Satan's is continually deconstructed and Christ's is undeclared and passive) that the poem is undecidable: even the fall of Satan and the angelic praise is only a temporary "victory" after all. Milton's readers knew then what modern readers know: the battle is destined to be ongoing and indecisive until the end of time if one believes. Milton's poetic rendition supplies an ironic verbal presence of a conflict in process: the deconstructive hermeneutic dispersed and repeated throughout the poem highlights their differences while holding them together deliberately as comparable and thus resembling one another: the Other is the opportunity for the Other. Satan tries to take full advantage of this situation or event, and Milton has added a prominent metaphor that marks this struggle of identity and difference: Christ is called "our Morning Star then in his rise" (I: 1. 294); while Satan is "like an Autumnal Star" in his fall (IV: 1. 619). Milton's *Paradise Regained* supplements the Word of God and Milton's own word in *Paradise Lost*; the Sons of God are related and measured in terms of one another in this microlangue, a
"world" in Heidegger's sense which says one "truth": interpretation makes all the difference.
FOOTNOTES -- CHAPTER 3


The most brilliant extended study in sympathy with Satan's character (for the most part) is Arnold Stein's Heroic Knowledge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957). He is firmly convinced and outspoken that the poem is a drama, and he makes a good argument. Stanley Fish's "Inaction and Silence: The Reader in Paradise Regained," in Calm of Mind, ed. Joseph Wittreich, Jr. (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University, 1971), pp. 25-47 comments on the language and rising action of the poem; but he gives a great deal of attention to the character and motivation of Satan too. Christ's character has many detractors, including most of the early commentators on the poem, and a few sympathizers. See A. E. Dyson's interesting but vitriolic attack, "The Meaning of Paradise Regained," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 3 (1961), 197-211; John Steadman's Milton and the Renaissance Hero (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). Most critics over the decades have followed the lead of Tillyard, Hughes, and Kermode, who regard Christ's character to be simply a heroic pattern or model meant to teach Christian behavior to temptation in the world; Christ's actions are not seen as truly dramatic as a rule. Occasionally discussed, without much depth, is the theological controversy over Christ's Arianism: Christ's double nature as man and God is supposed to have undergone a kenosis or emptying of the divine while he was alive and incarnate. Of course, the extent of Christ's humanity has a direct effect on the dramatic possibilities for his character. The Arian issue is usually discussed with the "identity problem" first enunciated by Allen Gilbert.


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12 Esmond Marilla maintains that the poem sets forth problems of the temporal world and issues that determine the course of human history in "Paradise Regained: Observations on Its Meaning," Studia Neophilologica, 27 (1955), 179-191; Arnold Stein argues that Satan manipulates time and history brilliantly in Heroic Knowledge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957); Laurie Zwicky started a real controversy with the discussion of divine time or kairos opposed to satanic time or chronos in the poem in "Kairos in Paradise Regained," Journal of English Literary History, 31 (1964), 271-277; Barbara Lewalski notes the differences between the two forms of time in Milton's Brief Epic (Providence: Brown University Press, 1966); Joan Webber contends that, through Jesus, timelessness is given to humans in "Son of God and Power of Life," Journal of English Literary History, 37 (1970), 175-194; Patrick Grant is concerned with the variant emblems or iconography of time in the poem, especially Satan as "time the destroyer" while Christ is "time the revealer" in "Time and Temptation in Paradise Regained," University of Toronto Quarterly, 43 (1973), 32-47; Donald Bouchard argues that history itself is a temptation offered to Christ and that Christ signifies "anti-history" in Milton: A Structural Reading (Montreal:
McGill Queen's University Press, 1974); A. B. Chambers takes issue with Zwický's opposing divine and satanic (or human) time, arguing that the church calendar embodies both in "The Double Time Scheme in Paradise Regained," Milton Studies, VII (1975), 189-205.


14 Buck, p. 43.

15 Buck, p. 43.

16 Buck, p. 45.


18 Poetic Presence, p. 7.

19 Poetic Presence, p. 25.

20 Poetic Presence, p. 141.

21 Poetic Presence, p. 142.

22 Poetic Presence, p. 143.

23 Poetic Presence, p. 144.

24 Poetic Presence, p. 151.


27 Poetic Presence, p. 164.

28 Poetic Presence, p. 164.

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