

INTRODUCTION

Hegel, Heidegger, and Derrida consistently characterize their thought in terms of a development, movement, or pathway, rather than in terms of positions, propositions, or conclusions. To do philosophy is not (at least not primarily, exclusively, or ultimately) to take up a standpoint or one side in a debate, but it is to engage in a different kind of showing. This showing involves texts that function on different levels, often complicating or contradicting on one level the conclusions drawn on another.

“Movement” (and its modifications: path, track, development, *Weg*, *Bewegung*, *parcours*, *mouvement*) is the metaphor of choice to which all three resorted when pointing out how their work exceeds the claims or conclusions found within it. Examples of this abound. For Hegel, the need for philosophy arises every time determinate, fixed positions—that are necessarily one-sided and incomplete—are posited as absolutes. This deprives them of their vitality, and *opposing* this fixation only exacerbates the problem. Instead, what exceeds the oppositions of reflection is their “own movement,” and the task of philosophy becomes tracing the immanent self-development or the “movement of the concept” [*Bewegung des Begriffs*]. The motto that Heidegger appended to the collected edition of his works is: “ways—not works” [*Wege—nicht Werke*]. He considered the propositional form an “obstacle” for what he called a “philosophical saying,” the concern of which is “neither to describe nor to explain, neither to promulgate nor to teach” (CP 4/6). Therefore, at the start of his 1962 lecture “Time and Being,” Heidegger gives “a little hint” to his audience: their task is “not to listen to a series of propositions,” but rather to hear the “movement of showing” [*Gang des Zeigens*] in those propositions, and to follow that movement (“TB” 2/2). And in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida writes that if his text were “abandoned to the simple content of

its conclusions,” it would be indistinguishable from a merely “precritical” text. What exceeds those conclusions (yet is somehow still legible through them) is a “pathway” [*parcours*] that traverses the text and “must leave a track” there (G 90/61). Indeed, deconstruction itself is “not a constative statement” but, as Derrida writes in numerous places, “something like a movement” (“OR” 27).

Two main questions guide the investigations in this book. The first is how we should understand such a form of thought that refuses to identify with the claims or conclusions it produces. What does movement mean? What is the sense of this indirect approach, and what necessitates it? The second main question concerns the possibility of critique. Hegel, Heidegger and Derrida attempted to complicate (and show that thinking or philosophy should not be reduced to) what can be *posited* in a theoretical *position*, what can be contained in a *proposition*, or what can be determined or decided through *opposition* (pro or contra, yes or no). I stress this in this way, not just to note the conceptual solidarity between these words, but also because my concern is with a certain model of critique and of relating to the philosophical tradition. This is a model of critique as one of competing positions, what Hegel called the type of “commotion” or “bustle” about “truths” in the plural [*Gedränge von Wahrheiten*] that a philosopher should stay away from,¹ or what Heidegger called “going counter” to a philosopher instead of “going to their encounter” [*entgegengehen* or *Dagegenangehen* instead of *begegnen*],² or what Adorno has so aptly called “mere standpoint philosophy” [*Standpunktphilosophie*].³ If the work of Hegel, Heidegger or Derrida may not be reduced to the specific positions found within it, then what does a meaningful critique of their work look like? How, and in what sense of the term critique, can one criticize, or critically engage with, a text that refuses to identify with an unequivocal position, if there is no final position to be judged, opposed or decided upon? What should a critical reader look for, if not the text’s conclusions? And how, conversely, are these texts themselves “critical”? How should the critical force be understood of a discourse that so blatantly, to use the words of Foucault, seems to “avoid the grounds on which it could find support”?⁴

These two questions could be reformulated as the general question whether there is something like a necessary indirectness, or a necessary equivocality of philosophical texts or of philosophical method. Is there a necessary self-complication of philosophical discourse? Where, when, at what point? What necessitates, justifies or motivates it? What kind of philosophical exposition could expose such a necessity? Could it do so unequivocally?

What I expected to write, was a book about reflexivity or performativity. That is: about the relation between what is written in philosophical texts and how they are written—combining certain concerns that I had about reflection, performative self-contradiction, justification, knowledge, method, style and language. I expected to critically engage with Derrida's texts, aided by the work of Hegel and Heidegger in the background, exploring their mutual affinities on this point. These affinities seemed to me to have gone too much overlooked in the literature, in favor of explications of differences between the “schools” of dialectics, hermeneutics, and deconstruction—differences which seemed to me often too superficial and oppositional to be meaningful. For the most part, this expectation came true: this is a book about the relation between philosophy's object and its method, about the logical necessities and impossibilities guiding the highly reflexive types of philosophy that attempt to put in question the very concepts and procedures that are unavoidably employed when putting anything in question (the value of truth, the nature of language, the structure of thought, the meaning of questioning, the role of writing, etc.).

What I did not expect, and what I can only now see clearly, is that this book has an overarching ethical concern. I now see that what the final chapters deal with explicitly is in fact a concern throughout. The questions of reflexivity should be read in the light of a question of responsibility. The questions of method to which this book is largely devoted (why do Hegel, Heidegger and Derrida not take themselves to be engaged in the production of conclusions or assertions, of more conventional theoretical treatises, of standpoints with respect to “debates,” etc.) can only be answered in light of the question what one considers one's task and one's responsibility as a philosopher to be. Method means: how should one respond? What is the responsible way to proceed? This is a responsibility that is displayed, exhibited, or shown in steps taken or procedures followed, rather than in taking up or defending a position with respect to some ethical or moral dilemma.⁵

My questions about movement originated in a critical engagement with Derrida's texts. If Derrida's position is privileged in the *Architektonik* of this book, it is because it was the question of the possibility of a critique of Derrida's work that gave this study its initial impetus. I soon came to recognize that the very idea of a “critique of Derrida” presents structural difficulties. If there is anything consistent about his writings, then it is their irreducibility to conventional theory or to the unequivocal presentation of a position. It is not that no clear positions or claims can be found in

Derrida's texts—it is that they never seem to be unequivocally endorsed. Rather than embodying the text's final intention, Derrida's claims and conclusions are invariably repeated, reversed, retracted, contradicted, visibly erased, or otherwise implicitly or explicitly complicated. He has recognized the necessity of this undercutting gesture under many names, calling it an "undecidability," a "hesitation," or a "trembling" proper to his writings, a necessary "avoidance" or a need to proceed "obliquely" or "strategically." I refer to this situation of Derrida's writings under the heading of "indirectness."⁶ That this indirectness is structural, that it names something of the essence of Derrida's writings, is not contradicted but only affirmed by the fact that Derrida so often explicitly denied that there is an "essence" or unity to his writings at all—by stating, for instance, that there is not "one" deconstruction, that it is "not a method"; that its categories are "not concepts"; that it is "not relativism" (or nihilism, or historicism, or skepticism) and not a "critique" or "criticism" or "analysis"; that it is "not philosophy"; that it is not certain whether deconstruction "exists" or is even "possible," and so on. All of this belongs to that very indirectness. Including the fact that the very term "indirect" is itself also not the adequate, definite, final or right word for what is investigated here—something Derrida continually stressed with regard to all his central categories.⁷

It seemed to me that the major point of contention when it comes to reading and understanding Derrida's work, is this indirect mode of writing. Paradoxically, it is this same characteristic that his staunchest admirers hail and his fiercest detractors criticize. As I describe in a bit more detail below, *polemics* has, in a variety of ways, made it difficult to investigate the specific kind of undercutting that is a necessary characteristic of Derrida's writings, in a way that would not require one to immediately submit to the oppositionality of being either "Derridean" or "anti-Derridean." Today, there are possibilities for a different type of commentary. My issue has been to ask, without already eyeing either a justification or a refutation of Derrida's work, how such a discourse of movement can be understood and criticized. Answering this question does not, as some may think, itself require indirectness, textual extravagance, or a poeticization of philosophical method (even though these cannot in principle be excluded from the realm of philosophical efficacy). I return to this question of my own method in the Afterword to this book.

If this book focuses on the indirect character of Derrida's writings, then what exactly are we looking at? To which topics, names, or philosophical traditions is it related? It does not seem to constitute a recognizable

Derridean theme (such as hospitality, writing, the gift, responsibility, justice, and so on). Instead, I seem to be making a theme out of Derrida's very way of proceeding. One answer would be to say that we are looking at Derrida's style of writing, but only if that concept is not already determined in its opposition to content, as mere externality or contingent form. It is certainly true that Derrida's indirectness also manifests itself "externally," or on the surface of his writings: it is marked in syntax, in the nonlinear structure of his essays, in his frequent use of hypotheticals and subjunctives, in the printed erasures and in the layout of his writings. But it would be insufficient to focus solely on these "external" aspects of style, or to perform a literary analysis of a certain type, if the question is whether there are reasons that necessitate that style. If the focus is on the entanglement of what Derrida writes with how he writes, then the meaning of Derrida's "indirect style" cannot itself rely on a rigorous distinction between form and content. The same holds if we were to say that this investigation is about Derrida's language (or his "use" of language) or his method (Derrida's tireless insistence that deconstruction is "not a method" is integral to his indirectness).

Though in one sense these questions undeniably concern the topics of language, style, and method, in another sense the issue is what in a certain way exceeds language, or at least a language of a certain direct or propositional type. Whatever "movement" may mean, it at least signifies what apparently cannot be stated or posited unequivocally; what one cannot directly talk "about" or (re)present in the conventional form of a theoretical treatise that provides results or conclusions. The word "exceeds" and the negative language that I employ here (what one "cannot . . .") indicate a concern with *limits*. The indirect approach indeed seems to point to certain limits of what can be talked "about," of what can be represented in the form of a presentation of a determinate thesis, theory, proposition, or conclusion. Perhaps we would have to say that this is an investigation of certain unsurpassable limits. However, that negative language suggests there would be something beyond these limits, something that one could not say, or at least not say directly or head-on; something that would be beyond our grasp: the ineffable or the unknowable.

At first sight, and for many interpreters, this might seem to be in line with some of Derrida's deepest concerns: with disruption, with "alterity," or with the "(wholly) other." These concerns arise in his "broaching" [*entamer*] what he calls the "order of logocentric metaphysics." Derrida's work would then be emancipatory with respect to this tradition and this

way of thinking, his work would be directed “towards the outside.” That is how, for example, Leonard Lawlor says it when he writes: “Derrida’s thought is structured by an exiting movement, a line of flight to the outside. That the outside is a sort of utopian non-place, an ‘elsewhere,’ in which it is possible to think and live differently, indicates what motivates deconstruction.”⁸

This is the thought that I resist in my reading. There is no question that, under the headings of alterity and singularity, Derrida always affirmed the necessity of emancipation.⁹ But Derrida is always highly suspicious of the elsewhere,¹⁰ and everything depends on to what extent such a non-place is indeed “utopian,” in which precise sense it would be “possible” to think and live “differently,” and how that difference is to be conceived. For in one sense of the term, a sense suggested by Lawlor’s quote, such an outside is itself the result of a particular binary *representation* of the limit (a boundary or dividing line that opposes a *diesseits* to a *jenseits*, an inside to an outside, or a this-side to a beyond) that is tributary to the very oppositionality and representation that it purports to “exceed.”

My claim is that Derrida is well aware of this complication, and one of my central claims in Part I is that alterity cannot be reduced to externality: there cannot be said to simply “be”—or be “possible”—anything outside or *opposed to* the oppositionality of what Derrida calls “logocentric metaphysics.”¹¹ Now, on the one hand, this is hardly news. It is, after all, one of Derrida’s best-known adages that “there is no sense in doing without metaphysics in order to shake metaphysics” (*WD* 412/354). But how must we understand that those who approvingly cite this phrase often take *that very insight* to elevate Derrida *above* “mere” metaphysics? What Derrida calls the “de-limitation of metaphysics” is not achieved by taking up a position counter to, above, or at a deeper level than the concerns of the metaphysical tradition he engages (if we can even speak of “achieving” at all in this regard). A consistent application of that insight alone is enough to open up possible dialogues between Hegel, Heidegger, and Derrida that have been absent in the literature.

Instead of positing an unattainable ineffable, it is in and through the movement of these writings that something of these essential limits is shown. This requires reading Derrida’s writings as the performative attempt to take into account an irreducible entanglement with, or inextricability from, metaphysics—an entanglement that Derrida identified under such headings as “irreducible contamination” or “complicity” (these are also the concepts that form the basis of Derrida’s ethics, which is, I argue,

fundamentally an ethics of complicity). This is what we must make sense of: that, in Derrida's words, the excess (whether as trace, supplement, or *différance*), in a certain sense, "is nothing"—that "[this] thought has no weight" (G 142/93).¹²

If it is not a matter of escaping to an outside—if, as I intend to show, Derrida's alterity is not simply externality and if deconstruction "works from the inside" (similarly: if Heidegger's philosophical saying is still bound to the representation it exceeds, and if Hegel's "movement" of reflection does not lie *outside* reflection)—then all the weight of explanation falls on how to interpret this "in."

First of all, if the notions of outside or beyond are themselves still oppositional determinations that, as such, undercut the excess of oppositionality they are supposed to signify, then "in" can also no longer simply signify containment within determinable borders. What I am out to show is that this is a thought that Hegel, Derrida, and Heidegger each takes on board in his own way. It can be recognized in the necessary "immanence" of Hegel's movement of the concept, in the inextricability of Derridean "contamination" or "complicity" and the denial of the "outside-text," and in the very special hermeneutical sense that Heidegger gives to "(always already) being-in" (the distinction of *in-sein* from *sein in*).¹³

These senses of "in" are far from identical, but what binds them is an awareness that there is an inextricable relation between *what* is written and *how* it is written. The character of the investigation (its method, its own language, its style, the sequence of its steps) cannot be dissociated from the content that is discussed within it (the nature of its object, or the subject that it speaks "about"). What *exceeds* "metaphysics" (Derrida), "representation" (Heidegger), or a merely subjective "philosophy of reflection" (Hegel) is the movement of or *in* the metaphysical, representation, reflection. Its excess is *implicit*.

If indirectness and movement signify an "implicit excess" or an "entanglement of method and object," then to this subject there does not correspond exclusively a single philosophical discipline, subject matter, or conventionally demarcated tradition. This entanglement takes on many forms, and the awareness of it is as old as philosophy itself. It is part and parcel of all philosophy insofar as philosophy by necessity employs the very procedures, values, or criteria that it sets out to put in question. The terms that come closest to naming this entanglement, and that have been most influential in the literature on Derrida, are perhaps reflexivity (for instance, in Rodolphe Gasché's classic 1986 *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida*

and the *Philosophy of Reflection*)¹⁴ or performativity.¹⁵ And to the extent that the indirect discourse performatively questions the values that it “itself” employs, there is a convergence between the question of movement and that long tradition of philosophical concern with “self-reflection.”¹⁶ In her description of the language that Heidegger employs in his *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, Daniela Vallega-Neu has coined another term for this problem of performativity when she calls Heidegger’s philosophical saying a “poietic saying.”¹⁷ She does this with reference to Heidegger’s interpretation of ποιησις as bringing-forth, to denote a language that stands in a productive rather than a representative relation to “what” it says. I am not able to use any of these terms entirely without reservation. Whether we call it performative, reflexive, or poietic (and there are other options: think of the distinction between “gesture and statement” or of Levinas’s distinction of the “saying” from the “said” [*le dire et le dit*]), the problem of indirectness and movement is the problem, to put it in Heidegger’s terms, that philosophy demands “a conceptuality of its own” and that it fundamentally “belongs to an attempt that requires other forms” (*PR* vii/1). I believe that with this question I am addressing the central point of contention in the discussions about the so-called continental-analytic divide in philosophy,¹⁸ as well as, broader still, about “postmodern” thought in general. These clashes have always been about method and about responsibility, about what procedures one ought to follow in order to think well; what language one ought to use and what steps one ought to take in order to philosophize responsibly.

By now, the interpretive challenges that I face in this book have already been laid out. Does not my emphasis on “in” not stand for the very Hegelian “immanence” that Derrida so vehemently criticized? Does Derrida not explicitly state that deconstruction “affirms the outside” (*D* 42/36)—an emphatic affirmation that does not sound very “indirect” at all, and an affirmation of an “outside” that, for that matter, does not sound very “implicit” either? How to align deconstruction on this point with Hegel and Heidegger? And why does the point of entry into these problems lie in the mode of writing?

This book is divided into four parts. My initial question was how a critique of Derrida’s discourse is possible at all, as it so blatantly “avoids the grounds on which it could find support,” and this is the subject of Part I. In order to answer that question, it is first necessary to qualify Derrida’s indirectness: what exactly does it mean, and what necessitates it? This is the subject of chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 3, I return to the

question of the possibility of a critique of deconstruction, and related problems of justification, refutation, skepticism, and method. Part II is about Hegel, before turning to Heidegger in Parts III and IV. Multiple complex interrelations (of influence and interpretation) exist between Hegel, Heidegger, and Derrida, and I am not able to do justice to all of them. The discussion of Hegel and Heidegger not only functions as an exemplification of Derrida's "critical" relation to the tradition, but also shows the way in which Hegel and Heidegger are themselves thinkers of movement, outside the confines of their Derridean interpretation. That is what I start with in both cases: in chapter 4 on Hegel before turning to Derrida's Hegel-interpretation in chapter 5, and in Part III (chapters 6 and 7) on Heidegger before turning my attention to Derrida's reading of Heidegger in Part IV (chapters 8 and 9). I discuss my approach in each of these parts below.

PART I: DERRIDA, INDIRECTNESS, AND CRITIQUE

Chapter 1 is devoted to showing exactly what is meant by Derrida's indirectness. I start from the opposite point of view: before conceding that a "structural indirectness" pervades Derrida's writings, couldn't one object that there is more than enough that is quite unequivocal in Derrida's texts? Is there not something like a Derridean "theory"? How to justify the focus on movement when Derrida presents us with so many quite unequivocal, direct propositions, and rigorous insights?

As it is commonly held that there is at least a recognizable theory of language to be found in Derrida's texts, especially in his earlier works (the published works up to 1972), my first chapters focus on those. At the center of my approach is a reading of *Of Grammatology*. I show in chapter 1 how that text undercuts the theoretical or scientific status of the theory of language that we seem to be able to find within it. Derrida aims to uncover an "incompetence of science" from which the accomplishment of this very uncovering—the text of *Of Grammatology* itself—is not exempt (G 142/93). This means that Derrida's notion of a "generalized arche-writing" cannot be taken to form a rival account to writing's traditional, narrow determination. But then the question becomes: what is the theoretical status of the text, what are its results or insights, and how or to what extent are these results defensible or justified?

Derrida announces that his reflections on the sign and language are not an end in themselves, but that they serve the “de-construction of the greatest totality—the concept of *epistēmē* and logocentric metaphysics” (G 68/46), which is the subject of chapter 2. Because for Derrida the very question of what logocentric metaphysics is entails a performative complication, I first show in a preliminary manner how Derrida uses the concepts of metaphysics and logocentrism under the headings of demarcation, opposition, hierarchy, and presence. The remainder of the section is then devoted to my main interpretive thesis: that alterity is not reducible to externality, which is to say that Derrida’s attempt to “write otherwise” is not reducible to a counter-position with respect to metaphysics. That is by no means a revolutionary thesis, but everything depends on the conclusions one draws from it.

The attempt to emphasize a Derridean theory or position on language evolved within a specific type of commentary. It arose in the early 1980s, primarily in the attempt to *defend* Derrida from accusations of the irresponsibility of skepticism, relativism, nihilism, or textual “free play.” Those accusations, and the ensuing polemics of defense and refutation, have long determined, and often still determine, the understanding of Derrida’s texts and the landscape of commentary. Such refutations usually either distill from Derrida’s work a certain thesis and show it to be flawed—thereby negating the very style and strategy (the movement) that is essential to his writing—or they show Derrida to be in contradiction with himself (whether immanently, logically, or performatively), thus eliminating the need to engage with Derrida’s texts at all, because they “refute themselves.” The question is, of course, what the force of such an objection could possibly be with regard to a work that so emphatically affirms, even blatantly flaunts, its own “self-contradiction.”

One of the strategies to defend Derrida against such criticisms consisted in asserting that Derrida *is in fact* very rigorous, and that there are good arguments to be found in Derrida’s texts. The supposition here is that the force of Derrida’s words and the value of his texts can be felt if these texts can be shown to be *theoretically* strong.¹⁹

Derrida is no simple relativist, and these attempts to defend his work therefore are no doubt necessary. But there is a risk involved in equating the force of Derrida’s writings with theoretical strength. Not only does such a reaction tacitly endorse the presupposed framework of critique (a polemic of positions pro and contra), but it also tends to

underemphasize deconstruction's most essential feature: that Derrida's discourse "does not restore confidence," that it "hesitates" for "essential reasons," that it "does not lead to possibilities," and that, in a certain crucial way, the activity of deconstruction "falls prey to its own work" (G 39/24). In this way, polemics (the dynamic of defense and refutation) endorses the very oppositionality that Derrida, through his writings, attempted to exceed. The form of Derrida's indirectness is what makes it exceed a simple relativism, but it is also what distinguishes it from a simply justified position. This *vulnerability* of deconstruction is grounds for neither justification nor refutation. But then what does this mean for the possibility of a critique of Derrida?

In chapter 3, I attempt to answer that question by focusing on three figures related to the question of justification, with which Derrida maintains a structurally ambiguous relation: empiricism, skepticism, and critique. That the movement of showing of Derrida's writing exceeds the positions one finds within it is confirmed by the fact that, on the one hand, Derrida often explicitly distances himself quite categorically from empiricism, skepticism, and critique. He repeatedly does this in the most unequivocal, propositional manner: deconstruction simply "is not" empiricism, skepticism, or critique. On the other hand, Derrida in various ways acknowledges a structural relation between deconstruction and each of these figures. The question of a critique of Derrida, in terms of justification and defense, therefore, has to be: what exactly is the relation between, on the one hand, Derrida's explicit opposition to these figures, and, on the other hand, the explicitly acknowledged structural "resemblance" between deconstruction and empiricism, skepticism, and criticism?

If Derrida is approached as a thinker of movement, and if alterity is not simply externality, then deconstruction's *own* critical force, that is, its relation to the metaphysical tradition, is not simply one of the very oppositionality that the movement of his writings attempts to exceed. This makes it possible to rethink Hegel and Heidegger as thinkers of movement with whom Derrida maintains a structurally ambiguous relation. Therefore, two questions guide Parts III and IV, which are dedicated to Hegel and Heidegger, and Derrida's relation to them: (1) in what sense are Hegel and Heidegger thinkers of movement, and how does the specific form of their "performativity" relate to Derrida's? (2) how does the non-oppositional character of Derrida's relation to metaphysics show itself in his "critique" of Hegel and Heidegger?

PART II:
HEGEL, MOVEMENT, AND OPPOSITION

In the case of Hegel, the main challenge was already outlined above: if Hegel is to be a thinker of *movement*, then he must be understood as affirming the limits of reflection. There are several traditions that stress the importance of limits for Hegel's philosophy. I do not argue for an "originary" negativity (as it is in certain postmodern interpretations), nor is my conception of limits fundamentally a matter of "finitude," specifically finitude of "man" (as it is for the classic existentialist interpretations of Kojève, Hyppolite, or Merleau-Ponty).²⁰ Instead, I locate the limits in the implicit self-complication of the philosophical exposition: that the excess of the absolute with respect to the determinations of reflection can only be shown in and through an exposition of the movement of those very determinations. One could call that limits of Hegel's "language," but not if that means, as Hyppolite has it, that the dialectic becomes a movement of "sense."²¹ Such a determination risks underemphasizing what I take to be the dialectic's most important aspect: that it is essentially an explication of the implicit, the exposition of which is never entirely unproblematic or reducible to positive sense.

I do not intend to present an exhaustive, or even an entirely new, account of Hegel's philosophy. The elements of my reading can already be found scattered across the literature, not least in some of the works of the authors mentioned above. My main intentions are to counter certain prevalent misconceptions about Hegel to which some readers of Derrida are especially prone (a climate I show Derrida's texts to have in part helped shape); to provide a point of entry in reading Hegel for those sympathetic to Derrida's concerns; and to come to a better understanding of the relation between Derrida and Hegel than that of an opposition of philosophical positions.

How does Derrida relate to the Hegel that I sketched above? I discuss his relation to Hegel in chapter 5, and we will see that Derrida differs from the approaches above by maintaining an essential ambiguity with regard to Hegel. The relation is similar in structure to the explicit denial of skepticism, empiricism, and critique: on the one hand, Derrida unequivocally distances himself from a certain Hegel and defines deconstruction in opposition to a "reappropriating dialectics" in which all negativity is reverted back to positivity, and in which every "outside" is reduced to the "immanence of the system." That kind of reading goes squarely against

the Hegel that I present in chapter 4. To the extent that this aspect of Derrida's Hegel-interpretation is isolated and absolutized, it has helped misguide a host of twentieth-century readers in their confrontation with Hegel. But Derrida is well aware that Hegel cannot be reduced to this figure of reappropriation, and there is always another Hegel at play in Derrida's texts, one who cannot simply be reduced to a figure of reappropriation. The question then becomes what the place of the oppositions and reversals of these different Hegels is within the broader movement of Derrida's writing. I argue for an understanding of Derrida's relation to Hegel in terms of a departure from Hegel that is enacted more than it is posited, by supplementing his oppositions to Hegel with what Derrida calls certain "textual maneuvers" (*MP* vii–viii/xv).

PARTS III AND IV: HEIDEGGER, PERFORMATIVITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY

The publication in 1989 of Heidegger's 1936/38 *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* and the works in its wake²² has profoundly changed the way we understand Heidegger's development, philosophy, and authorship. It has sparked renewed interest in a host of themes from Heidegger's later works. Of these themes, no doubt the one that stands out most is the theme of language.²³ Heidegger writes: "Here the speaking is not something over and against what is to be said but is this latter itself as the essential occurrence of *beyng*" [. . . *hier ist das Sagen nicht im Gegenüber zu dem zu Sagenden, sondern ist dieses selbst als die Wésung des Seyns*] (*CP* 4/6).

With that, the *Contributions* is an exemplary text with which to qualify the specific form of performativity, the entanglement of method and object in Heidegger's work. The limits of the propositional no longer lie, like they did for Hegel, in a necessary "one-sidedness" of any given determination, but in a "destruction of the genuine relation to words" that characterizes our time. "In" now no longer stands for Hegelian immanence. Instead, the very form of the problem of entanglement changes. It now takes the shape of the question: how to question the limits of what one is always already essentially caught up or involved in, in such a way that it is—at least partly and at worst completely—hidden, concealed, or withdrawn? I argue that for Heidegger the "failure" of representational language is not to be (nor can it be) fully overcome, but that the required

poietic saying consists in a different “attunement” [*Stimmung*] to the (re)presentational language of metaphysics. It is an attempt to recognize and preserve a certain necessary failure-to-say with respect to the question of being, which is why Heidegger calls it a saying that “effects the highest thoughtful reticence” [*Welches Sagen leistet die höchste denkerische Erschweigung?*] (*CP* 13/13). Part III is devoted to unpacking what this means. Chapter 6 consists largely of a reading of *Being and Time*. I show how that text—though it is often considered one of Heidegger’s methodologically more conservative texts—to be constituted by an indirectness and a performative complexity that centers around Heidegger’s special hermeneutical notion of “being-in.” What I show is that it is not only with the later works that performativity and language become essential. Against the idea of a fundamental turning in Heidegger’s thought around 1930, I argue for a continuity of concern from *Being and Time* to the *Contributions*. I then devote chapter 7 to Heidegger’s later texts, centering around a reading of Heidegger’s *Contributions*, in order to interpret Heidegger’s indirectness by looking at the *Contributions*’ style and Heidegger’s ideas about a new philosophical language or “saying” constituted by withdrawal, reticence, silence, and attunement. I show that Heidegger’s search for a new language is not, as Derrida sometimes objected, the search for a language that finally gets it right, but for one that recognizes and preserves a certain failure to say the truth of being.

Then, in Part IV, I look at what this means for Derrida’s relation to Heidegger. At first, it is possible to recognize the same structure in Derrida’s relation to Heidegger that I articulated with respect to Hegel in chapter 5 (as well as that of deconstruction’s relation to empiricism, skepticism, and critique from chapter 3). Again, it is a matter of several Heideggers that are at work in Derrida’s texts: the one who according to Derrida works within the “hermeneutical circle,” which Derrida interprets as fundamentally a project aiming for the fullness of *meaning* (one is “caught” in the “confines” of that circle), and another Heidegger, whom Derrida locates around the central figure of the *Contributions*: that of *Ereignis*. Derrida distinguishes the two and fails to fully grasp their inner connection, as I show it in Part III. Still, it is important that Derrida does not straightforwardly choose between these Heideggers. Rather, in his texts he moves from the one to the other, while also enacting a departure from Heidegger through a “textual intervention.” One text that brings this out well is Derrida’s masterful 1978 essay *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles*. (Because of these textual interventions, and because the need for indirection is inti-

mately related to the need for a “plurality of styles,” Nietzsche’s thought is a recurring feature throughout this book.)

No philosopher has had a greater impact on Derrida’s writing than Heidegger. Can we equate Derrida’s mode of ambiguity with respect to Heidegger to that of his oppositional entanglement with Hegel? In chapter 9, I show how in *Of Spirit* we seem to encounter a different kind of critical relation. There Derrida addresses concerns that seem to be systematically *avoided* or underrepresented in Heidegger’s work (such as gender, politics, race, heritage, animality, or the body). By taking Derrida’s indirectness as our frame of reference, it becomes possible to show why that avoidance cannot be simply countered or reversed. At stake is to question whether a thought of “irreducible complicity” can aim for a *presentation*, a *making-present* of what Heidegger avoided, or whether there is something like a necessary avoidance. The ambiguity of Derrida’s critique of Heidegger is exemplified by his diagnosis of what he calls the “privilege of the question” in Heidegger. In the very impossibility to question that privilege, Derrida identifies an excess of the horizon of Heidegger’s question of being that nevertheless cannot be understood to go “beyond” or “deeper”; an unquestioned privilege “before” the question that, because the privilege is only *affirmed* in questioning it, is not simply before. It is an affirmation at work *in* all questioning; a commitment that is not the commitment to any definite principle. It is on this thought that Derrida bases a new concept of responsibility.

Derrida’s concept of responsibility leads to questions that exceed the scope of the present investigation. I do not aim to give an exhaustive account of that concept and the texts in which Derrida presents it. What necessitates Derrida’s indirectness lies in the strictures of reflexivity as I bring them out in Derrida’s works on language, metaphysics, and the way he relates to Hegel and Heidegger. These strictures make up the, if you will, structural or theoretical part of the philosophical sense of Derrida’s indirect approach. It is with this new concept of responsibility that we explicitly move toward more normative or ethical considerations.

Two central thoughts are often associated with the question of an ethics of deconstruction. The first is that there was something like an ethical turn in Derrida’s work, which would have taken place in the second half of the 1980s. The second is, especially because this turn coincides with a certain engagement with the work of Levinas, that the ethics of deconstruction revolves around the concept of the “other” and a responsibility “to the other.” What I want to show is that one can identify an

ethical turn superficially at most, and that the relation of deconstruction to responsibility lies precisely in the mode of writing. Second, I show that the question of the “other” is liable to misinterpretation because, like the “outside,” it risks interpretations of the kind of oppositionality that Derrida’s indirectness is out to exceed. Instead, Derrida’s affirmative responsibility lies in the indirect way of writing as it attempts to account for the various strictures that any critique (or emancipation, resistance, or protest) is involved in when questioning a norm to which one cannot simply oppose oneself, or from which one cannot simply extricate oneself. More than the “other,” I argue that it is the thought of an “irreducible complicity” that guides Derrida’s concept of responsibility. This ethics of complicity is the ethical expression of the structures of entanglement worked out in the earlier parts of this book.

The attempt to affirmatively assume this responsibility is the most positive sense of what motivates deconstruction. This is the point where Derrida is furthest removed from the kind of destructive or merely negative discourse, indeed from the kind of theoretical irresponsibility, that he has so often been accused of taking up. The perspective of movement enables me to show that this affirmation is not the positivity of an ethical position, but that the enactment of Derrida’s indirect movement is for him the form of an affirmative philosophical commitment and the way to produce the least irresponsible response. For him, to engage in the deconstructive mode of writing, or to enact or engage in that kind of movement of showing, *is* what it means to respond responsibly.