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Number(s) of Future(s), Number(s) of Faith(s): Call It a Day for Religion

Abstract:

Encrypted in Derrida's contribution to the Capri Seminar on Religion in 1994 are three retrievals: of his discussions of speech and of systems of inscription; of a concealment of splittings in the supposed continuities of traditions; and of a complicity between the operations of religion and those of a dissipation of the unities of science, Enlightenment, and knowledge, into proliferating autotelic tele-technologies. These retrievals take place between the lines of this discussion of faith, knowledge and religion, which arrives in two halves, each in twenty-six sections. The first half arrives in italics, as spoken on the day, and ends by invoking Voltaire on toleration and a contrast between Christianity as Institution and Christianity as the legacy of Jesus and the Apostles. The second half, appended as a written supplement, with footnotes, is signed and dated April 26, 1995. Husserl's *epoche* arrives as recurrent performance, challenging the unity of Heidegger's *Ereignis*; contrasting modes for the arrival of futurity are invoked in a juxtaposition of the names: Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, and Bergson, thus providing more than two sources for Derrida's meditations on religion.

Keywords:

alphabets, calendars, dates, encryption, faiths, futures, names, numbers, sources

“Globalatinization [mondialatinisation](this strange alliance of Christianity as the experience of the death of God and tele-technoscientific capitalism) is at the same time hegemonic and finite, ultra powerful and in the process of exhausting itself. Simply, those who are involved in this outbidding can pursue it from all angles, adopting all ‘positions’, either simultaneously or successively, to the uttermost limit.

Is this not the madness, the absolute anachrony of our time, the disjunction of all self-contemporaneity, the veiled and cloudy day of every today.”

Jacques Derrida: Section 15: “Faith and Knowing: Two Sources of ‘Religion’ at the Limits of Reason Alone” (1995) *Acts of Religion* (2002) 51–52.

1. Crypts and Alphabets

Two preliminary questions arise for me in relation to Derrida’s essay “Faith and Knowledge: two sources of ‘Religion’ at the Limits of Reason Alone.”¹ The first is the question of number, and perhaps of calculability, to which latter term Derrida turns in his fiftieth section, under the title, in bold typeface, “**Calculability**,” directed by the question: “why should there always have to be *more than one* source?” (AR, 100). The “more than one” here indicates Derrida’s preoccupation with the constitutive function of an operation of repetition, thought as iterability. As indicated by my title, the question of number is dual, with a question to numbers of futures, none, one, or many; and a question of numbers of faiths: are all religions to count as faiths? Or is Christianity unique in its supposition of the importance of faith, as opposed to a focus on ritual, on obedience, on salvation, or on mystery, as the defining motif for religious adherence? The second question concerns a typographical shift, which takes place between the first twenty-six sections of this essay, as published, which were spoken at the Symposium on Capri, dated February 28, 1994, and the second twenty-six sections, added as a postscript, or supplement, for the purposes of the published version, dated April 26, 1995, Laguna Beach, California. The afterlife in the writing of the supplement must be supposed to precede the event of the initial delivery, in so far as the logic of grammatology indicates how the written record is always a precondition for any event of vocalization arriving as meaningful speech. These two movements, of iterability and of an afterlife of writing, are two of the distinctive modes of temporalization which arrive in Derrida’s writings.²

The insistence on dating as a marker of time indicates a connection from this text back to Derrida’s reflections on Paul Celan, in his essay “Schibboleth.”³ This juxtaposition of texts, the remarks on religion, and the discussion of Celan marks up an asymmetrical symmetry between the claim from section fifteen of “Faith and Knowledge” (cited in the opening epigraph), concerning an absolute anachrony of Christian, and secular

1) Derrida, “Faith and Knowledge,” and Anidjar, ed., *Jacques Derrida: Acts of Religion*, 42–101. The translations in both is by Sam Weber, and citations here will be taken from the latter cited as an in text parenthetical as AR with the page number.

2) For the defining moment when Derrida affirms the many sources for a multi-dimensional concern with time and temporalization, see his 1968 lecture, “*differance*,” which suitably enough arrives in print in two distinct versions. When first published in French in the *Bulletin de la société française de philosophie* LXII (July/September 1968) it was preceded by the abstract circulated in advance of the occasion of the address, in which the “a” of *differance* was inaudible, drawing attention to the concealed nature of the workings of difference and time. This is the version translated by David B Allison in Jacques Derrida: *Speech and Phenomena: and Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs*. When subsequently published by Derrida in *Margins of Philosophy*, it was published without that prefatory remark, and with lengthy annotations by the translator. It begins: “I will speak, therefore, of a letter. Of the first letter, if the alphabet, and most of the speculations which have ventured into it, are to be believed,” see Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, 3.

3) Derrida, *Schibboleth* and Derrida, *Sovereignties in Question*.

time, between the disruptive, disjunctive arrival of an intimation of the divine incarnation, and the omnipresence of tele-technology. In “Schibboleth,” or, as it arrives in English, “Shibboleth,” Derrida makes the following observation about dates:

But already within the hearth of a single language, for example French, a discontinuous swarm of events may be commemorated all at once, *at the same date*, which consequently takes on the strange coincident, *unheimlich* dimensions of a cryptic predestination. The date itself resembles a shibboleth. It gives ciphered access to this collocation, to this secret configuration of places for memory.⁴

An absolute anachrony may be contrasted to a collocation of events, in the naming of a date, and both are to be inserted into the reversal of order, the *usteron proteron* of speaking and writing, as analyzed in *Of Grammatology*.⁵ The thought of a collocation of events in a date is connected by Derrida to the gesture of the signature:

In essence, a signature is always dated, and has value only on this condition. It dates and it has a date. Prior to being mentioned, the inscription of a date, (here, now, this day etc.) always entails a kind of signature: whoever inscribes the year, the day, the place, in short the presence of a “here and now” attests his or her own presence at the act of inscription.⁶

This sets up a powerful counter movement between the dynamics of an act of inscription, and its temporal marking as date, and that of the surmised acts of religion, under which title the discussion of “Faith and Knowledge” arrives in translation, into English, in the twenty-first century. A collocation of events is also to be contrasted to a singular event, as the opening up of a groundless grounding of meaning. A multiplication of sources, as “*more than one*,” or as “*n plus one*,” is to be juxtaposed to the gathering of the singular event, thought by Heidegger as the *Ereignis* under erasure in the age of tele-technology.⁷ This “age of tele-technology” is Derrida’s updated version of Heidegger’s age of the world picture, discussed in the paper of that name in 1938.⁸

The shift from the French and German inscription “Schibboleth” to the English-American “shibboleth” may also be marked, as a question of the variability of the values of alphabetical differences, even within an alphabet, held in common, and between closely related languages, such as English, French and German. Derrida’s preoccupation with typographical shifts arrives in “Faith and Knowledge” in the printing of the first half in italics, as reported speech, under the non-italic sub-heading “ITALICS,” which might be thought, by

4) Derrida, *Schibboleth*, 24.

5) See Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, which introduces the paradoxical thought of an originary supplement, and of a transition from the age of the Book to an experience of writing. The translation of this volume is now a subject of controversy, with a new edition designed to eliminate misprints and infelicities, the success of which is also in dispute. “Grammatology” is canvassed as a name for a “positive science” as the study of distinct kinds of inscription, marking a relation between speaking and writing. The analysis goes by way of responses to Hegel and de Saussure, Rousseau and Levi-Strauss, Aristotle and Husserl.

6) Derrida, *Sovereignities in Question*, 16.

7) The key source here is Martin Heidegger, *Of the Event: Contributions to Philosophy* cited by Derrida in his section 44. Derrida also refers his reader to the discussion of Heidegger in Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*.

8) See Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture” in Young and Haynes, *Martin Heidegger: Off the Beaten Track*. Derrida returns to the discussion of tele-technology in discussion with Bernard Stiegler in Derrida and Stiegler, *Echographies of Television*, especially in chapter three, “Art of Memory Topolitics and Teletechnology,” 56–67. For a discussion of Derrida, Stiegler and Jean-Luc Nancy sharing an inheritance of Heidegger on technology see Hodge, “Inheriting the Question of Technology,” 139–59. Originary technicity is a term developed by Stiegler to capture a connection between grammatology and technologies of inscription.

implication, to be addressed to the type-setter. The second twenty-six sections, printed in non-italic script, under the non-italic sub-heading, in capitals: "POST-SCRIPTUM," has a subordinate sub-heading in italics, *Crypts*. Here, by implication shibboleth arrives doubly encrypted as the exemplary case of the encryption, accompanying inscription. This encryption, hidden in inscription is the source of Derrida's reservations with respect to Husserl's commitment to the salutary effects for rendering reason reliable of reiterated attempts to provide precise descriptions of the appearances of appearances.⁹ The word "*religio*" is, in this second series of remarks, treated as a crypt of untranslatability, in which there takes place various transitions, not least that from the civic religions of Republican and Imperial Rome, to the Christianity of Emperor Constantine, and of the one holy Roman Apostolic church, with its seven sacraments, to match the seven seals of the apocalypse.

The sacred number is here revealed to be seven, as the number of days of the week, and as the time of creation, with a seventh day of rest. This number is to be contrasted to the human dimensions of the fifty-two sections of Derrida's fifty-two week year of toil, the time of the rotation of the earth around the sun, and of natural growth and decay. Derrida attends to the apocalyptic tone in which some discussions of religion inevitably find themselves addressed, if they arrive at their thematics, via responses to the Jewish and Christian messianic traditions, and if they are inflected through a reading, as that of Derrida must be, of his rehearsal of Kant's discussion, in 1980, in his "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy."¹⁰ The other text in the light of which this piece may be read is the interview from January 1989, printed in "*The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*,"¹¹ which is called "Call it a Day for Democracy" (*La démocratie ajournée*). There Derrida analyzes a notion of public opinion, and journalistic immediacy, of a certain politology and a cinematography of a notion of being up to date, in which commitments to democracy are both announced and postponed.¹² My proposal is to read Derrida as writing in both registers: in that of journalistic immediacy, and, at the same time, as also necessarily postponing the nexus of issues for subsequent deliberation, since the dimensions of religion, religions and "the religious" are non-denumerable. The registers of journalistic record then mark a spectral delusion concerning a determinacy of religion in chronological, dateable time.

A reconnection between politics and religion, between political analysis and religious meditation are to be inserted within this juxtaposition of an ordinary, calendrical, daily notion of time, and an apocalyptic notion of time: as eschatological fulfilment and completion, variously figured as messiah, whether arrived or anticipated, as the messianic, and in the various messianisms of tradition. This juxtaposition resonates throughout the piece, with further echoes of a distinction between a strong and a weak messianic force.¹³ The ordinary conception of time is intimated in the conjunction of the western alphabet, with its twenty-six letters, more or less, and the

9) Derrida's long discussion of Husserl's "On the Origins of Geometry" from 1962 and its attention to primordial phenomenological temporalization defies summary see Derrida, *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry An Introduction*. One of the many surprises in Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, was the arrival of a discussion of the phantom of communism in terms drawn from Husserl's analyses of phenomena, in the various versions of his phenomenology. In 1990 Derrida had published his 1954 study of Edmund Husserl, Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*. This publication settled the question of Derrida's grasp of the intricacies of Husserl's phenomenology. Derrida returns to discussion of a difference between the Kantian and the Husserlian idea of philosophy as an infinite task, in the second of the essays in *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*. "The 'world' of the enlightenment to come (exception, calculation, sovereignty)."

10) Delivered at the conference "The Ends of Man: Starting with Jacques Derrida," at Cérisy la Salle, July/ August 1980, and published in French in 1981, in the conference proceedings, and in English, in Coward and Foshay eds., *Derrida and Negative Theology*.

11) Derrida, *The Other Heading*.

12) Ibid.

13) Derrida discusses Walter Benjamin on weak messianic forces in his "Force of Law: the 'Mystical foundation of Authority,'" which was delivered in the USA in two halves in October 1989, and on April 26, 1990. A more complete version was then prepared for publication and arrived in English in Gil Anidjar ed., *Jacques Derrida: Acts of Religion*.

year of fifty-two weeks, more or less. For Derrida, the more or less has the function of Heidegger's "proximally and for the most part," introduced in *Being and Time* to capture the approximate nature of everyday identifications.¹⁴ It marks up how the immediacy of the given masks a complexity of encryption, both as modes of ciphering, and transmitting, and as actual entombments and burials, rendering invisible, inaudible and inaccessible important residues of not yet registered past events. The "ordinary conception of time," it is important to recall, is described by Heidegger in section eighty on, in Division Two of *Being and Time*, as arriving by virtue of a forgetting of the meaning of being, and as derived from a concealed ecstatic primordial many dimensional time of pasts, presents and futures, which Heidegger seeks to excavate in the later sections of Division Two. For this ecstatic unity, arriving at the site of inquiry called Dasein, time would be always in evidence as the mode of arrival and non-arrival of the meaning of being, in a configuration of entities presenting themselves for inspection and classification, and in the human experiences and narratives, theorizings and oversights to which these writings and religions bear witness.

This forgetting, for Heidegger, has lasted from the time of Aristotle until at least that of Hegel, and perhaps also Bergson, and probably also to his own faltering attempts in drafting *Being and Time*, to bring to the fore a distinction between the multiple dimensions of the dissipative temporality of Dasein, and the unifying time of Being, or Being as time. In section eighty-two, Heidegger seeks to show how Hegel's analysis of time reproduces the basic commitments of that of Aristotle, in his *Physics* "Book Four." There are of course also pivotal exceptions to this rule of forgetting, in Saint Augustine's analyses, in the *Confessions*, of a time of distension, which is of such importance for Edmund Husserl; and in Soren Kierkegaard's reflections on the relation between conceptions of time and the constitution of identities, for human beings: in the aesthetics of repetition, in the ethics of conformity, in the religions of ritual, and in the religions of mystic transformation. Heidegger sidelines both Augustine and Kierkegaard in his drive to reveal an eternal return of the same forgetting of being across the philosophical tradition, held in place between Aristotle and Hegel, between Nietzsche and his insight into a pre-Socratic other beginning. This constitutes an epoch, an age of thinking, which is to be brought to the edge of a reversal into some other order of thinking at the beginning of this twenty-first century.

Derrida's analyses here in "Faith and Knowledge," also drawing on Kant and on Bergson, on Hegel and on Levinas, form part of the process of revealing just how past this vision of an eternal return to Greek origins, as depicted by Heidegger, has become. In his pivotal essay "*Ousia and Gramme: Note on a note in Being and Time*,"¹⁵ Derrida drew attention both to Heidegger's claims about the similarities and continuities, in the analyses pursued in Aristotle's *Physics* and in Hegel's account of time, and to how Heidegger must become aware that his own analyses will also conform to this cycle of attempted break with, and subsequent conformity to such a forgetting of the meaning of being. Derrida notes that there is for Heidegger a contraband, or countermovement (*Gegenwesen*) within the forgetting of the meaning of being, which either offers itself up wholesale to an

14) See Heidegger, *Being and Time*. The third Division of part one, advertised as a reversal from an analytic of the temporality of Dasein, to a retrieval of an understanding of being as time, supposedly available to Greek philosophers, has never appeared.

15) Derrida, "*Ousia and gramme*" is printed as the second essay in Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*. The note in question is note xxx, to pages SZ 432–33 (MR, 500) of section 82a, on Hegel's conception of time. It is added to the sentence, in English, "Here the sequence of 'nows' has been formalized in the most extreme sense and levelled off in such a way that one can hardly go any further." (SZ 432). Heidegger attempts in four short paragraphs to assimilate Bergson on time and movement to the structures he identifies as in common between Hegel and Aristotle. Derrida is not here intent on releasing Bergson from Heidegger's grip. He is rather intent on questioning whether Heidegger can call on an adequate as opposed to these vulgar or derivative concepts of time, discussion of which turns on the question of the status of concepts. Since strictly there are concepts only within metaphysics, both originary and vulgar concepts of time remain within the metaphysical, and therefore inadequate concept of time. There is thus a concept of time, but only as a distortion of a more adequate, for Heidegger, existential attestation, for Derrida, a deconstructive writing of time.

abandonment by being, or continues to be transmitted, encrypted within the very gestures of exclusion and abjection, rationalization and containment to which analysis is prone. It is then convenient to mark a retrieval of Augustine and Husserl, of Pascal and Bergson between the lines of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, accompanying the more explicit series of engagements with Plato and Aristotle, with Descartes and Kant.

Time and alphabetization may be thought to conjoin, forming an historical context, with a question to epochs of alphabets, in both senses of designating an age by a dominant trait, and in the sense of suspending commitment to the one naturalized feature, in the interests of unveiling a more complete, if fractured ontology, as this time of countermovement. Section fifty-one contains the sentences: "ontotheology encrypts faith and destines it to the condition of a sort of Spanish Marrano who would have lost – in truth dispersed, multiplied – everything up to and including the memory of his unique secret. Emblem of a still life: an opened pomegranate, one Passover evening, on a tray" (AR, 100).

If ontotheology encrypts faith, in the bold type of this "crypts," Heidegger's history of being encrypts the histories of civilizations not marked primordially by the conflict over the Dome of the Rock and the number of angels of the apocalypse. This might be pursued on some other occasion. My interest here will be in Derrida's handling of the encrypted, Husserlian conception of the *epoche*, and in this question of naturalizing and de-naturalizing alphabets. What follows is a section to discuss numbers, and secrets, quantity, and calculation; and a section on the movement from thematizing qualitative differences, to thematizing differences, as *differance*, and then on to consider the suggestion made by Jean-Luc Nancy of think the delay of *differance* as the auto-deconstructive inheritance of Christianity, with its lessons in thinking an im-possible conceptuality.¹⁶

2. Numbers, and Secrets, Quantity, and Calculations

Further questions to be posed are: to what secret, to what inaudibility, in speaking, and what invisibility, in writing do these markers concerning crypts and encryption, **crypts** and **encryption** gesture? Further to this theme, it is important to note that the last fifteen sections of the second part of the text are separated off from the preceding eleven sections, under the further sub-heading, printed in bold italics, "***and pomegranates.***"¹⁷ Here Derrida signals a shift into yet another register, in these bold italics, with fifteen final propositions, in sections thirty-eight to fifty-two. Here implicitly there arrives for attention the works of violence, in the name of religion, suicide bombings and ritual beheadings, as contemporary modes of exaggerated religious testimony. The pomegranates of the Garden of Eden, through which Adam fell, become the grenades of religious factionalism. There are then one, two, or possibly three distinct sections to the text, marked by use of shifts from italics, to standard typeface, and then to boldface. The notion of pomegranates marks, but does not engage, the processes of translation and transposition of the fruit of that forbidden tree from the Garden of Eden, somewhere north of Basra, into its three emanations as Jewish, as Christian, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and as Islamic, Sufi, Sunni, Shia, with that faint resonance of a pagan bastard cousin, the apple of discord, presented by Paris to Aphrodite, in return for which she bestowed on him the destructive fascination of Helen, once of Sparta, then of Troy, and perhaps of Egypt, and thereby, the mother of all Greco-Turkish wars.

16) Jean-Luc Nancy was one of the organisers of the conference in 1980, "The ends of man: starting with Jacques Derrida." His doctoral thesis, subsequently published as *The Experience of Freedom* was examined by a committee of which Jacques Derrida was a member. Nancy's essay on Derrida's mode of writing "Elliptical Sense," was delivered in 1987, and published in his *La pensée finie*, 269–96, where he writes: "The condition of possibility of the origin (for sense) is called *writing*," 270.

17) The figure of the pomegranate returns at the end of the penultimate section, as cited here in section 1, with a reference to a still life (*une nature morte*), of a tray with a cut open fruit: "Emblem of a Still Life," (AR, 100). The pomegranate, one of the seven sacred foods, symbolises fertility and, with a supposed 613 seeds, recalls the 613 commandments of the Torah.

There is a further almost inaudible trace of pagan culture, with respect to the myth of Persephone's pomegranates, consumption of which marks the shift between six months of winter and six months of summer, with Persephone returning in spring from Hades to her mother, Demeter.¹⁸ This cycle is taken up and reconfigured in Catholicism, and in Orthodoxy in distinct guises, but each with a pagan local allegiance taking the place of the universal scope of love presumed, but not always affirmed, in Christian doctrine. Pagan culture arrives in the sub-liminal workings of Derrida's address to "religion," and in the address of "religion" to us, through Derrida. The violent repression of pagan culture and its return in the arbitrary authoritarianisms of religious authority is to be sounded out. Bergson's name arrives in the text at this junction point, between parts one and two of this second section, and this arrival marks a certain unease in the flow of Derrida's analyses and reflections, with only the shortest of consideration given to Bergson's analyses in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*.¹⁹ My remarks, if following Kant alone, should now consist in four sections: on quantity: how many religions and how many returns; on quality: on how Bergson's interest in two sources for morals and religion is at odds with Derrida's analyses of the one and the many; on relation: how this discussion inserts itself into, while also disrupting, a certain European narrative about religion and reason, faith and scientificity, with that disputable double origin, in Athens, and Jerusalem; and the repressed further origins of the religious at Mecca/Medina, and in Eden/Basra. There is finally a concern for a modality of discussion, to be called unfriendly fraternity, whereby Jean-Luc Nancy, by insisting on an encounter with Georges Bataille, opens up a different kind of impossible necessity. The transitions between these four will not here be strictly observed.

The thematics of the more than one/no longer one (*plus d'un*)/"n" plus one resonate with this question of number and calculation; they are also resonant with the question of a number of monotheisms, and of deities, and of the instability, within each of the three monotheisms, of the figure of a single, unified deity. Judaism, initially in conflict with all the local gods of the Canaanites, and with an internal split between figuring a local, and imagining a universal deity; Christianity, and Islam, are necessarily in conflict with this dual God of the Old Testament, who, it must be supposed, came first. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, to name them in their historical order, cannot without dissimulation remain indifferent to one another; and it may be that an aberration in one is to be taken as the sign of tension and unresolved conflict in another. They are themselves a three in one, and one in three, proffering a complex logic to which Hegel draws attention on more than one occasion, in his inimitable fashion. The typographical shift of Derrida's remarks draws attention to a different kind of instability and malleability in the themes and thematics ostensibly under interrogation. This may be the shift from Roman to Italian Christianity, from the forthright script of Times Roman, to the devious manoeuvres of a Fine Italic hand, which then poses for attention the previously unmarked further shifts to a Christianity written in Modern Greek, in Russian, in Urdu, in Bengali. Russian Orthodox resistance to Catholic Kiev is currently much in the news.

Both scripts, italic and non-italic, make use of a single Roman alphabet, with twenty-six letters, only in part concealing the movement in the Holy Scriptures of the three named religions, first from Hebrew, to Aramaic, and Greek, and then to Latin, and to Arabic, and then to all the vernaculars of contemporary Christianity. Some other alphabet would have given Derrida a different number of sections for his discussion of religion, with its two wings, one spoken and one written, the first twenty-six sections delivered as indicated, at Capri, the second, added as a supplement, in the mode of a retardation (*Nachtraeglichkeit*), and delay (*Verspaetung*), under the title *Crypts*, dated April 26, 1995, at Laguna Beach, California. The structures of supplement and

18) Michael Naas, in chapter eight of his *Miracle and Machine*, draws attention to the myth of Persephone, and to the dual status of "grenade" in French.

19) See Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*.

afterlife, of retardation and encryption are powerfully at work in the development of the thinking in this piece. These splittings also resonate with a marked difference between the incantatory register of say the Psalms, and attempts to render doctrinal the content of Gospel, in a ratified Creed. There is an unpayable debt, for its possibility as performance and impossibility as written record, to its own constricted conditions of meaningfulness, marked up by these devices of presentation. Discussion of relations between these three named religions, and then with various paganisms, might then be supposed to require a sensitivity to the divergent logics of at least four alphabets, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, in which the languages of their respective inspirations and practices are recorded, and transposed. A certain *epoche* and reduction of the chance of alphabetical order, alpha to omega, might be in order. No doubt part of the logic of “globalization” is to render classical languages invisible, demotic the only remainder, and vernacular the victor. The runes of Viking paganism are no less illegible. Thereby the tele-techno-scientific world invoked by Derrida as in league with a certain replaying of religion is revealed as profoundly unlettered, unaware of its own lineage, and line of descent, since it functions with a strangely limited repertoire of alphabets, scripts and meanings.

This is made all the plainer in Derrida’s attempts to mark a shift back and forth between the trans-atlanticism “globalization” and the specifically French term “*mondialisation*,” the former now yoked to an analysis of the development of global capital, the latter marking the rights of one of the great European languages of Empire, alongside Spanish, Portuguese and English. The further inflections invoked with the terms “globalatinization,” and the francophone “*mondialatinisation*” are not easily heard. It might be a case for putting Derrida’s inspired term “philopolemology” from *Geschlecht Four* back into circulation, with its insistence on the love of conflict, or strife at the heart of all abstraction, in which one localism seeks to assert its priority over another.²⁰ The terminological means by which Derrida seeks to position and problematize the locality and localism of his remarks themselves become in turn covertly restricted in resonance, encrypted in their own performance. In sections 36 and 37, of his text, Derrida invokes Henri Bergson’s concluding remarks to his *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*:

Humanity lies groaning, half crushed beneath the weight of its own progress. Human beings do not sufficiently realise that their future is in their own hands. Theirs is the task of determining first of all whether they want to go on living or not. Theirs is the responsibility, then, for deciding if they want merely to live, or intend to make just the extra effort required for fulfilling, even on their refractory planet, the essential function of the universe, which is a machine for the making of gods.²¹

Mere living here is opposed to a life in which a trans- human ideal is to be envisioned and lived for. Bergson’s vision of the future is here placed by Derrida alongside those of Kant and of Hegel which have more usually dominated readings of this piece. Readings of this piece have in the main considered the relation between Kant and Hegel, on religion and on futurity; and between Heidegger and Levinas, on a transition from thinking the sacred, to responding to the demands of the holy, obscuring the arrival of Bergson’s rather different registers of inquiry. The task of inventing machines for the making of gods, and of meanings, the prosthetic activity of human beings in creating their own meanings and reality is the new task for religion, as envisioned by Bergson, and here invoked by Derrida, but without further comment. This introduces the subversive thought that gods are not given, but made. Bergson claims that this line of inquiry may provide human beings with the wherewithal to

20) See Derrida, “Heidegger’s Ear: *Philopolemology* (*Geschlecht Four*), 163–219.

21) See Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, 317.

do more than “merely live,” through a contrast between the “merely living” and making “just the extra” effort, indicated in his citation. There is in Derrida’s discussion a certain inaudibility of Bergson, and a corresponding invisibility of his even more disruptive compatriot, Georges Bataille, whose sensitivity to the pagan residue in Christianity needs supplementing with an inquiry into a pagan residue in Judaism and Islam.

There is however here also a curious, and absolute contemporaneity of Derrida’s thinking, dating from 1994/95, from Capri, somewhere off Naples, and from Laguna Beach, California; for the various inaudibilities and invisibilities which come to the fore there are still in play. For the West, the land of the setting sun, has still not thought through its distinctive paganism, nor yet the pagan origins of the hostile responses to the asylum seekers, now washing up on the shores of the islands of Christian imagining and in the English Channel, also known as *La Manche*. Migrants to California by contrast come from all directions: those from the East, across the prairie, oddly counting as indigenous; those from the south, across the Rio Grande and from the west, from China, Japan, the Philippines, as profoundly foreign, despite the names of the towns, Los Angeles, San Francisco. In his 1994 text, Derrida transposes a question of religion first into a questioning of a certain hasty, journalistic account of a “*question of religion*” (AR, 44), a “*return of religions*” (AR, 45) and then into an attempt to think the “return of the religious” (AR, 45). He then, in this 1995 postscript, transfers the formulation back into one with a “*question of religio*” (AR, 66), and again a “return of the religious” (AR, 69), and a “speaking calmly of the return of the religious today” (AR, 78). He asks: “When we speak, **we Europeans**, so ordinarily and so confusedly today about a “return of the religious,” what do we thereby name? To what do we refer?” (AR p. 69). Nietzsche is invoked if not quoted. Religion has hidden itself in the interstices of a thinking about time, and of political sovereignty. It is to be rediscovered by paying careful attention to the writings of Montaigne and Pascal, Kant and Hegel, Heidegger and Levinas, Plato and Schmitt.

However, when, under the title of “pomegranates,” in section thirty-nine, we are invited to think circumcision, it arrives as an operation probably to be thought only as inflicted on male children, rather than through the horror of female genital mutilation, and we may begin to wonder whether there is even a beginning of a thinking about an exclusion here of the indicated excluded voices: of Islam, of asylum seekers, of women. Marking an absence may only reinforce it. “Hence the even more pressing obligation: not to forget those of either gender whom this implicit contract or this ‘being-together’ is obliged to exclude. We should have, we ought to have begun by allowing them to speak” (AR, 47). In section thirty-nine, a link is made to a certain violence against women: “And this would be the place to enquire why, in the most lethal explosions of violence that is inevitably ethnic – religious – why, on all sides, women in particular are singled out as victims (not “only” of murders, but also of the rape and mutilations that precede and accompany them)” (AR, 85). But the link to a customary, everyday practice of female genital mutilation, its role as a reason for asylum seeking, and the need for analysis of how female complicity is organized, is not made.

It is important to reflect on which asylum seekers, and which economic migrants are to be found profiled in which locale. Capri may not be Lampedusa, but it is still an island which represents for migrants of all kinds, not an *aporia*, a stalling of desire, but a promise, a way out of Africa, and out of what was once a multicultural Middle East, into a European future. In the immediately preceding sentences, Husserl, that emblematic refugee from Nazi persecution, lecturing in Vienna and Prague after his exclusion from the German University, has been invoked, but only to be put back in a bracket of some other devising:

We who today have come together to meet on this island and who ourselves must have made or accepted this choice, more or less secretly, is it a co-incidence if all of us, one day, may have been tempted both by a certain dissidence with respect to Husserlian phenomenology and by a hermeneutics whose discipline owes so much to the exegesis of religious texts? (AR, 47)

It is curious not to remark here that Husserl was not safe from Nazi persecution, even though he had willingly converted to Lutheranism. A dissidence with respect to Husserlian phenomenology implicates some kind of orthodoxy, and then the arrival of a series of secessionist movements, not unknown in the annals of academia, but also familiar from the history of religions. Attention to Husserl, and to a variety of ways of deploying his practice of bracketing will return in what follows. Once doctrinal content is suspended, what remains of religion is neither faith, nor Holy Scripture, but rather systems of inclusion and exclusion, of authority and subjugation, and an indemnification of those who appropriate to themselves religious authority. The politics of exclusion are here inevitably at work, as are the semantics of multiplication: there are then at least three terms here, religion, religions, the religious, to be echoed perhaps, by attention to a series of shifts from the topic, science, the sciences, scientificity, even while, and precisely because the singular “religion” is held up for attention. A further series of terms might be added in here for further discussion: technology, technics, prosthetics, all bearing with them modes of privileging participation and distinctive modes of exclusion.

3. *Differance and Retrait*, Separation and *Partage*

The curiously minor role assigned to a reading of Bergson, and the absence altogether of the name of Georges Bataille, with whom a reinvention of religion and the powers of paganism would be put back to play, suggest a reverse series of readings. The series: Bataille, and Bergson, Nietzsche, and Kant sets up a rather different kind of arrival of religion from the advancing series: Kant, and Hegel, Heidegger, and Levinas. This reverse reading would perform a version of the exemplary move made in the *retrait*, announced by Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, in the proposed bracketing of politics, in favor of re-thinking the political, which is here to be mimicked in a *retrait* of religion, in order to think the religious.²² Politics is to be denaturalized and put through an interrogation concerning the chances of its origins and futures. The same move may be made with respect to religions. The religions dominant in the masculine traditions of liturgy and philosophy, theology and religious study may rewardingly be subjected to such a denaturalization, and interrogation with respect to the chances of their origins and futures. While Jean-Luc Nancy has made it plain that he is no longer committed to privileging a political conceptuality in any rethinking of ontology, the move to the sketch of a deconstruction of Christianity might be thought in part to execute the indicated need to widen the focus of inquiry, both with respect to the political, and with respect to religious commitments, inaudibly holding certain traditions of philosophy in place.²³ Derrida’s resistance to any such linkage between deconstruction and Christianity is

22) See Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *Retreating the Political*, in which are to be found translations of, amongst other essays and notes from the eighties, *Le panique politique*, 6. There they pose the double question: how does the subject support itself? And how does authority authorise itself? and go on to surmise: “Monotheism does not take up a god (a figure of death); it confronts death, the Other- my desire- a face withdrawn from all figures,” (Ibid., 27). The proposal, to be pursued on another occasion, is to move this analysis of religion and politics away from its *thanato-graphic* engagements with reading Freud and Heidegger, and instead to put it into relation with the movements of Husserlian *epoche* and of Bergsonian accounts of the time of life.

23) Jean-Luc Nancy had canvassed the thought of a deconstruction of Christianity already in his *The Sense of the World*, 55: “sense– if it’s still or finally necessary to do justice to the obstinate request of this word– can proceed only from a deconstruction of Christianity,” and he ties it to a deconstruction of tragedy later in his text. The two volumes of his *Deconstruction of Christianity* *Declension* and *Adoration* came out in 2005 and 2010. In a footnote to the earlier text Nancy remarks with remarkable understatement that it will be necessary to return to the surmised connections between an auto-deconstruction of religion, the “death of God” and the sense of the world as an abandonment with neither return nor supercession/resurrection (*réleve*) of any redeemer (ibid., 183). The thought must be that the three monotheisms lose unity and fail to bind peoples together in quite distinct ways with distinctive trajectories. For further thoughts on Nancy on the ambiguities of any resurrection of the body, as discussed by him in *Noli me tangere: On the Raising of the Body*, see Hodge: “Remembering Gary Banham: Genealogy, Teleology, Critique,” 225–39.

a matter of record, if arriving by retardation somewhat after the fifteen month time lapse of our text, February 1994, to April 1995.

Two considerations deserve further attention: first, the eruption of hyphens in naming an object of thought. Derrida's use of hyphens in the term: "Judeo-Christian-Islamic religiosity" tends to suggest, as Gayatri Spivak points out in another context, a failure to think through the power relations of interdependency in play.²⁴ There is also in Derrida's text an odd turbulence in the attribution of a concern with a "return of the religious," with a certain journalistic interest, in the order of the everyday, as opposed to the times chosen by the religious: those of apocalyptic catastrophe, disruption and conversion, and the fulfillments of *parousia*. This journalistic concern is contrasted to the concerns of whatever the more serious, more considered, more philosophical posing of the initial question: how "to talk of religion" (AR, 42), and how to think "this *phenomenon*, so hastily called the 'return of religions'" (AR, 45). In the contrast between the exigency of daily responsiveness, as opposed to the luxury of long term meditation, vulgar need as opposed to refined contemplation, Derrida may be proposing to go with the journalistic flow, rather than to hold out for a restoration of mediaeval teaching practices, and an exhaustive, definitive exploration of the *questio*. For under the former description, adopting the task of an interrogation of a journalistic "return of religions," there would also fall a need to inspect and interrogate the faith and trust invested in science and in scientists, indeed in criticism and journalism, and to subject to suspicion any deference to the authority of experts, and their secret dossiers.

There are some odd imbalances in Derrida's initial discussion, and some differences of register to attend to: those which can be heard, those which can partially be heard, and those which are not heard at all. For while these thoughts are announced under the title "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of 'Religion' at the Limits of Reason Alone," and intimates a meditation on an encounter between religion and tele-technology, the move into analyzing the parallel hybrid dynamics between the cultic values of tele-technology, is indicated, but not made. The affirmations therein of a certain masculinity, not unknown in the religions of the Book, would also be worthy of inspection. The accommodations within religious practices of tele-technological mediatization also needs updating: the printing of the Bible in Reformation Europe sparks the fires of the Thirty Years War; more might be made of the call to prayer now broadcast, as pre-recorded, and transmitted by loud speaker, and of the recitation of *sura* with the aid of iPhones in the backrooms of shops all over the world. Discussion of the use of Facebook to recruit to Jihad, and of the posting of Horror Youtube films would update the analysis into this hybrid cross-over world. This would underpin the reflections in Derrida's essay on the sacrifice of the living to the dead, invoked in section forty, and make possible a cross over into an analysis of those other arrivals of technology, in the domains of science and religion, gene therapy as a panacea for all ills, even death. Cryogenic and cyborg technologies hover on the verge of Derrida's text, and there are a certain number of obvious supplementations of some of its suggestions, some of which indeed have been performed in the interim. Micro-biology has transformed the horizon for thinking life and death, as macro-biology transforms the sciences of ecology and environmentalism, thus transforming understandings of the standing of the human in the planet.²⁵

The threefold invocations in Derrida's title of Kant, Hegel, Bergson, matches the threefold invocation of monotheisms, but leaves Bergson's discussions in the 1932 text, like the invocation of Islam, and its multipli-

24) Gayatri Spivak, the translator into English of *Of Grammatology* had written a response to Derrida's *Spectres of Marx*, 'Ghostwritngs,' to which he in turn responds in his "Marx and Sons" in Sprinker ed., *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx*, 213–68.

25) For some further thoughts on this see Hodge, "Philosophy in a Time of Stasis: Jacques Derrida and the Viral Condition," 165–72. The publication of the 1975–1976 seminar Derrida, *La Vie La mort*, proposing a logic of the living for which death and life are not placed in opposition has prompted discussion, not least in McCance, *The Reproduction of Life Death*; and Vitale, *Biodeconstruction: Jacques Derrida and the Life Sciences*, both based on pre-publication access to the ms.

cation as Sufi, Sunni, Shia, only marginally engaged. Bergson's name arrives again by implication in section forty, with a brief invocation of his conception of life, and his notion of a machine for the making of gods. It is in section thirty six, in the transition to the subsection of part two, subtitled, "...pomegranates," that the title of Bergson's book is named, and in section thirty seven that Bergson supplies the distinction between a certain mechanism in thinking, and the "living spontaneity of an unscathed property of life." Here, I suggest, further discussion of the covert paganisms of certain Christianities, and the covert Christianity of certain philosophies should be inserted. The masculinity of all these only partially idealized divinities also needs serious interrogation, and while all the names of women in history, from Eve, and Demeter, Persephone, and Aphrodite, to de Beauvoir, Arendt and Spivak, to Liz Grosz, Donna Haraway and Judith Butler, remain unnamed, we are not yet out of the all-male mediaeval seminary.

It is Bergson's name which provides Derrida with the opening in which to rehearse a conflict between an immune system which protects, and an auto-immune system which attacks itself. Derrida writes concerning "religion":

It conducts a terrible war against that which protects it only by threatening it, according to this double and contradictory structure: immunitary and auto-immunitary. The relation between these two motions or these two sources is ineluctable, and therefore automatic and mechanical, between one which has the form of the machine (mechanization, automatization, machination, or *mechane*) and the other of living spontaneity, of the unscathed property of life, that is to say, of another (claimed) self-determination. (AR, 82)

Religion and the immune system are seen in this context as turning into a single system predominantly of self-defeating activity. The binding together which religion offers, and the ideals of conduct which it may be thought to propose, thus may act against the needs and interests it is supposed to serve. But what if religion had always and principally been a mechanism of dominance and ex-appropriation, as a reading of Nietzsche would suggest? Derrida is here too deferential to the claims and self-imaging of these religions, and to these thinkers of religion, as opposed to its critics, primarily but not only Nietzsche. For these are claims made by religion, for religion, by the religious, or rather by those elected by the religious to present or represent religion. The discussion absorbs the Bergsonian distinction between regeneration, and rigid mechanism too rapidly into a model prepared by thinking with Kant and with Hegel, as opposed to allowing what is unprecedented in Bergson's text to arrive.

The subsequent shift in reflections on differences between two sources, thought contrastively as the sacred and the holy, as that which is immune from damage, and as that which repairs the damage, while of course illuminating, does not reassure, for the terms are still those chosen by the religionists, as opposed to being exposed to a genealogy of suspicion alert to the excluding and controlling forces in play. These, it might be worth remembering, usually function to maintain and sustain an existing authoritative order and existing distributions of empowerment, rather than proposing any emancipatory alteration of the terms of the exchange. The distinction Bergson seeks to draw on to motivate his analysis, of the beneficial and the harmful in moral and religions thinking, is subordinated here to a model advanced by Kant, and this distorts Bergson's text. Where Kant contrasts the static and the dynamic, in terms of the basic categories and forms of judgment of the First Critique, Bergson installs a difference within the matter to be responded to. The thing in itself of religion is to be opened up to reconfiguration along less asymmetrical lines, where women too may be priest, Imam, Pope. There is also a difference to be marked up between a life form without demise, or proposed as without demise, and thus thought of as static, and a life form which may entail its own modification, even to the point of elimina-

tion. The work on the concept of life done by Bergson takes his enquiries into a wholly other domain even from those of Levinas, who reads him with such enthusiasm. When the distinction between judgments of taste and teleological judgment, arrives in the Third Critique, the basic commitments to hylomorphism, and some kind of continuity thesis between the reason of human beings and the reasoning of a divine mover remain in place. Bergson's analyses by contrast arrive in a different space, inventing their own basic categories which cannot be fitted into the Kantian grid. This Derrida acknowledges elsewhere, but here, in this piece on religion, the force of the old ways of thinking are hard to shake off, and the reading of Bergson suffers as a consequence.

There are contrasting ways of thinking life processes: as subordinated to rigidly given rules, conforming to immutable essences; or as evolving in line with self-modifying, transformatory rules of organization, as metamorphosis. Derrida picks up on a contrast between the mechanical and the mystical in Bergson's text, which overlays this distinction, and thus moves too rapidly to subvert, not to say deconstruct the implied contrastive terms. Bergson's project of expanding the domain of the biological into a fully dimensioned study of life, and of the death it carries with it, appears here on the horizon as a threat to the movement of deconstruction as deployed by Derrida. It is perhaps time for Foucault and Nancy to ride to the rescue, by expanding the context in which deconstruction is to be thought to be in play. It is also worth underlining that Bergson's title is *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, two sets of phenomena, not one, and that in it he sets up a distinction between a static religion of authority, magic and thaumaturgy, and a dynamic religion of mysticism, regeneration and invention. *Matter and Memory* may have looked overly pre-occupied with a relation between a past and a present: this text, *The Two Sources*, is oriented to thinking the arrival of the future, as unprecedented.²⁶ The danger to be marked up here, and to which it is easy to succumb, is of course that in order to be heard at all, it is necessary to align oneself within the orders of given authority, and within already available linguistic registers.

The last concern here is to explore Derrida's resistance to Nancy's proposal to develop this inquiry under the title, *Deconstruction of Christianity*, as a supplement to, or critique of the 1980s project of bracketing off politics, in favor of thinking the political. This is perhaps best approached by highlighting the status of conceptuality for discussions of religion, and the function of a critique of abstraction in the text of philosophy. The three deaths of god, it is well enough known, are the death on the Cross, the collapse of the Creationist myth, and the decline of the moral authority of representatives and figurations of the divine, Pope, Imam, priest, clergyman. The first is disputed by Judaism and Islam: this was not the death of God. The second is elaborately performed by Kant's critical philosophy, whereby philosophy is emancipated from the authority of scriptural doctrine, and scriptural doctrine is no longer tied to the banalities of the omniscient in conflict with the benevolent, the omnipotent in conflict with the power of love. The third is put into circulation by Nietzsche, when he remarks "we have still not got rid of God, while we still hold on to grammar." The third move suggests that philosophy and theology, reason and revelation, knowledge and faith, far from being opposed one to the other, have always quietly co-operated in the task of keeping thinking in order.

To develop this thought, I should like to retrieve Husserl's critique of abstraction and universalism, in *Logical Investigations*, in relation to the determination of meanings, and delimitation of reason, which he proposes to replace with the detailed careful cumulative self-correcting processes of descriptions of evidence, as it presents itself to fully reduced intuition. Two remarks are needed here: Husserl's *epoche*, his technique for separating philosophy from common sense, is designed by him to put in question what perception or custom takes to be the case, and instead make available access to what actually is, or might be. There is a strong commitment in Husserl's enquiries to a criterion of truth, and to practices of verification, to the possibility of corri-

26) See Bergson *Matter and Memory*, of which the fifth edition was translated into English, by Paul and Palmer.

gibility and the likelihood of thoroughgoing shifts of conceptuality. Derrida's brief invocation of Husserl and of the *epoche* suffers in transmission from the twin dangers of an over assimilation to the infinite affirmative task of reason as proposed by Kant, but predicated on quite a different conceptions of reason, of scientificity, and, therefore, of religion. The other danger for Husserl's phenomenology is of it being thought to be sufficiently inherited by Merleau-Ponty, whose writings tend rather to render Husserl's phenomenological program a matter within a history of philosophy, rather than, as Husserl sought to locate it, as the dawning of a new age for humanity at large, with a transformatory relation to established discipline divisions, and to contemporary conceptions of science.

For Husserl, phenomenology is to take philosophy out of the seminar, and seminary, and into the laboratory, and the brave new world of interventionist scientificity, which then leads in to the current deployments of tele-technology. Not only meanings but entities themselves are here under modification, as inquiry proceeds through its processes of delineation and provisional determination. The distinctions between what is unalterable, and identifying morphologies of change, shift and are themselves in process of transformation. The infinite task of reason as outlined by Kant is, as is well known, tied to a notion of cosmopolitical intent, and to a conception of world-wide citizenship, with associated conceptions of ethnic and national divisions and sovereignty. The Husserlian vision, while marred in the *Vienna Lecture*²⁷ by invocations of itinerants and indigenous peoples as not yet fully civilized, nevertheless has the cure within its own terms of reference: the specification of what it means to be human itself may be posited as an infinite task for investigation, not an essential meaning, given at the beginning of time. Husserl may be wrong in his estimation of the essential characteristics of humanity, as grounded in some European singularity, with instead a genesis for humanity beginning again, each time a lineage and inheritance is proposed and endorsed. A differential time of human civilizations is to be inserted into the conceptions of time proposed by Bergson, and by Husserl, which is neither human centered, nor fixed to a flourishing of the human species: but within which human flourishing, activity, and thinking, destructiveness, religious intolerance and contestation arrive for attention. This time began before there were human beings, and will function long after the human species is but a vague memory in genetic transmission. Hence the importance of contrasting the scope of reflection of the Capri Symposium, on Reason and Religion, Science and Faith, and that which is also resonant in Derrida's text, the trace and echo, and running forwards into non-human inheritances in human histories, and the non-human inheritances within human activity, the echoes of the chthonic deities of pagan origin.

By way of non-conclusion then I shall cite Nancy's reworking of *differance*, the difference which arrives only by virtue of temporal delay, and revert to that other passing glimpse in Derrida's text, the citing and citation of Husserl with respect to a thinking of *epoche*. Nancy's reworking of *differance* may be thought to arrive on his every page, although it is perhaps also an unworking, in its silent address to the impossible reconciliations, completions, and shiftings of register performed, under the rubrics "concept," "logic" and "Hegelianism." The focus on unworking reveals how even "*differance*" suffers from the sedimentations of usage, and thus ceases to mean what it was invented to imply, becoming a term in an Hegelian series of cumulative partial fulfilments of some foreclosed destiny of reason and philosophy. There is an oscillation between a return as unworking, as opposed to a return as reaffirming. Thinking in terms of unworking then becomes a challenge to the scope and effects of the Husserlian program of bracketing, of *epoche* and reduction. This sets up a more marked gap between the thinking put in motion in Nancy's texts, and the iterations, or returns of phenomenology to a matter

27) See Husserl, "The Vienna Lecture" delivered on May 7 and 10, 1935, in Vienna under the title "Philosophy in the Crisis of European Humanity," 269–99.

in hand, to the *Sache selbst* of Husserlian imagining.²⁸ In section twenty-eight of his text, Derrida marks up, not for the first time, a certain reservation with respect to the Husserlian notion of the *epoche*:

Henceforth, despite the ethical and religious urgencies that do not permit the response to be put off, reflection on the Latin noun “religion” will no longer be held for an academic exercise, a philological embellishment or an etymological luxury: in short, for an alibi destined to suspend judgment or decision, at best for another *epoche*. (AR, 64)

However, religion as a rebinding is also a return to what once was in place. The return made possible by Husserl’s practice of *epoche* does not restore a lost unity and purity, it is not nostalgic. It rather makes possible a new and more adequate way of thinking and responding to what presents itself for attention. I should like then to make a claim for a return to this less tentative version of the *epoche*: one which ties back together the naming of an epoch, in a division of time, and the operations of judgment, in an ordering of thought. For Husserl, these two cannot be allowed to separate. This *epoche* is not the one performed by some divinity, at the beginning of time, nor yet one which suspends, in order to postpone judgement, but one which in the midst of time, suspends dogma, in order to allow truth to arrive.

In his section fifteen, Derrida marks up a revolt in Judaism and Islam against the notion of “the death of God,” announced by Kant, and affirmed by Nietzsche. The absolute anachrony of Christianity and tele-technology announced by Derrida in this fifteenth section introduces a question from Nietzschean genealogy to Heidegger’s conception in *Being and Time* of wanting to have a conscience, (*Gewissenhabenwollen*) as a classical figure of a quest for certainty. This quest is thrown into yet further turmoil by the emergent splits and reconfigurations of Islam, in the splits between Shia and Sunni, between Sufi and Wahaabi, and, territorially, between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The price of oil may be more salient than the martyrdom of Hussain, in terms of geo-politics, but an absolute contemporaneity of Derrida’s analyses lies in his worry that the figures of *chora*, of the island, and the crypt, in which Christ’s body is only temporarily installed, conceal dimensions of conflicts internal to religious configurations yet to emerge, between sites of memory and projections of a promise of hope, generating the mass migrations and cultural upheavals of the day. *A Deconstruction of Christianity* will not touch on these dynamics. The thing in itself of religion, the unscathed, the untouched, the hidden resonates, but does not register, and perhaps cannot be accessed by resort to a movement of thought, so directly named “Deconstruction of Christianity.” Derrida’s resistance to this term is worthy of respect, and requires some supplementary discussion of what a deconstruction of Judaism, or a deconstruction of Islam might look like, and indeed a deconstruction of monotheism. The task may be to think the relations between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and a certain residual paganism, in which locality and tribe takes precedence over unity and eternity.

28) For a brief response to his recent death see Hodge, “Jean-Luc Nancy 1940–2021,” 78–83.

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