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Originary Metaphysics: Why Philosophy has not Reached its End

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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In response to the increasingly widespread contemporary assertion concerning the end of philosophy as metaphysics, I show that philosophy has by no means reached its end. I accomplish this by developing the notion of originary metaphysics. Since such metaphysics or thinking can only happen in the present, it does not have a past, and so cannot come to an end. Originary thinking is different from the historiographic kind—the kind that, as I argue, is always already over. Thus, when Heidegger and Deleuze assert that metaphysics has completed itself, or that it needs to be overturned they cannot be referring to originary thinking, but are merely making a statement about its ossified historiographic double.

My notion of originary metaphysics emerges from an engagement with the writings of Parmenides and Plato. Through a close analysis of Parmenides' *Poem* I show in what sense intuition constitutes the beginning of originary thought, as well as the way in which this thinking relies on the oneness of everything that is. Next, I consider Plato's dialogue *The Sophist* in order to explore the distinction between the philosopher and the sophist. As a result, I establish that the sophist and his or her art of manipulating appearances are absolutely indispensable for the philosopher. The third chapter confronts some historiographic interpretations of Descartes's mind/body distinction by focusing on his intuition of the *cogito*. It is by means of this intuition that Descartes radically distances himself from the historiographic philosophy while simultaneously continuing Western philosophical tradition.

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Introduction

Heidegger and Metaphysics

This work is a response to the by now deeply rooted sentiment of the end of philosophy as metaphysics, and I say sentiment because by the beginning of the twenty first century we have become accustomed to this idea to such an extent that it has turned into one of the habits of thinking. It is the same kind of habit that makes our hearing and sight dull and misleading, as Parmenides' goddess will assert in the *Poem*, the same kind of habit with which Descartes will try to dispense through his method of doubt. The sentiment of the end can be traced to several different moments in philosophy's history: Kant, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida. Ultimately, it makes no difference with which of these thinkers this idea is associated, although every attempt to trace it to one of them will have its own distinct shape. It is possible, of course, to map out the idea's history through all four thinkers, or find other—both earlier and later—philosophical figures who could be seen as the ultimate proponents of this end. My own trajectory of thought goes back to Heidegger, although Heidegger himself refers back to Nietzsche.

So what exactly is this sentiment? It is the tendency to think that philosophy as metaphysics is no longer possible, that the kind of thinking that was available to Plato or Hegel—the kind of thinking that has been called since Aristotle first philosophy—has exhausted or completed itself. Although the present manuscript is concerned exclusively with philosophy, the sentiment of "the end," as well as nihilism and relativism that often accompany it, pervade many different spheres of Western thought.[1]

The formulations of the end of metaphysics are diverse. Some of them assert that philosophy is impossible after the wars of the previous century,[2] others declare that we "must no longer be in desire of philosophy" or that "[p]hilosophy as architecture is ruined."[3] Using slightly different terminology, Jan Patočka claims that "*Europe has disappeared*, probably forever," where by "Europe" he means the Western tradition of thought.[4]

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[1] Consider, for instance, a recent book by Donald Kuspit entitled *The End of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[2] Mentioned in Alain Badiou. *Infinite Thought: Truth and the Return of Philosophy*. London: Continuum, 2003, p. 143.

[3] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-François Lyotard, respectively. Quoted in his *Manifesto for Philosophy*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, p. 28.

[4] Jan Patočka. *Plato and Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p. 89-90.

Let's consider an instance of this "sentiment of the end" in the work of one of its key advocates in the most recent decades, Jacques Derrida.[5] In doing so I will also indicate the kind of approach that the present work will take.

Derrida writes: "Metaphysics—the white mythology which reassembles and reflects the culture of the West: the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, his own *logos*, that is, the *mythos* of his idiom, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason."[6] Even though this passage does not explicitly proclaim the end of metaphysics, yet in it a strong suggestion to that effect is made insofar as metaphysics is exposed as non-rational—a fact that is supposed to subvert the long-standing tradition of Western thinking. Thus, here Derrida might be seen as intending to undermine Western philosophy, or, at least, Western metaphysics, and although the aim of my project cannot be farther from this, I entirely agree with this thinker on at least one point: myth and reason are one every time philosophy begins. Yet, as I will argue, this fact in no way jeopardizes or undermines metaphysics.

Derrida continues: "White mythology—metaphysics has erased within itself the fabulous scene that has produced it, the scene that nevertheless remains active and stirring…"[7] True, but only a certain kind of thinking disrupts its connection with this "scene," and therefore, turns into a caricature of metaphysics, or what I will call the metaphysical double. Insofar as originary metaphysics is concerned, even though it might not be explicit about the oneness of *mythos* and *logos*, it necessarily draws from this oneness. Throughout this work I will maintain that the postmodern attack on metaphysics can only reveal the shortcomings of the metaphysical double, and thus, in no way jeopardizes the status of originary thought.

In the above passage by Derrida we witness an accurate observation that is clearly misapplied if it is being taken to mean the end of a certain kind of thinking, for it merely points out a necessary feature of this thinking.

Let us consider one more instance of this attitude, this time in Heidegger's writings. As is well known, in his so called middle and late periods he insists on the need for another beginning. This theme is especially dominant in the *Contributions to Philosophy*, and in the first lines of his essay "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God Is Dead'" Heidegger writes:[8]

> The pointing of the way [towards asking about the essence of nihilism] will clarify a stage in Western metaphysics that is *probably* its final stage; for inasmuch as through Nietzsche metaphysics has *in a certain sense* divested itself

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[5] I would like to make it clear that given that Derrida's thought is subtle and difficult to pinpoint or classify it might be argued that he does not endorse this attitude. Yet, very often he is, and sometimes with good reason, understood to say just that.

[6] Jacques Derrida. "White Mythology." *Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 213.

[7] Derrida, "White Mythology," p. 213.

[8] This essay is based upon Heidegger's lectures on Nietzsche (given between 1936 and 1940). Cf. Martin Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. New York: Harper & Row, 1977, p. x.

> of its own essential possibility, other possibilities of metaphysics can no longer appear.[9]

If we read the above quotation carefully, we will notice that in the span of one sentence Heidegger twice qualifies his assertion that philosophy as metaphysics has reached its end by saying that *probably* metaphysics is in its final stage and that with Nietzsche metaphysics *in a certain sense* has deprived itself of its possibility. That is, in this particular formulation Heidegger proclaims that metaphysics is over, and that all one can do is point out a way towards asking about this happening, yet he says this with a certain reservation. That is, Heidegger himself is not entirely comfortable with proposing an end to an activity that occupied the West for over two thousand years. And precisely because his hesitant thinking, his melancholy but often excessively affected deliberations on the end have by our times solidified into an all-pervasive mood, it is about time to confront and reconsider it. Thus, the question that I would like to raise as to this supposed metaphysical suicide: What if metaphysics did not end at all? Or, better yet, what if the always already dead "body" of the metaphysical double has been mistaken for originary metaphysics?

This book will take up just this line of inquiry.[10] I will maintain that metaphysics is a philosophical thinking that thinks being. Ultimately, metaphysics is possible because "[it] is the same to think as well as to be."[11] The philosopher is the place in which such thinking happens, and the time of metaphysics is the *now*. Metaphysics, then, cannot be dead because it does not have a past or a history. If it is at all, it is alive. I will call such metaphysics originary.

Metaphysics as a historical record of thoughts that have already occurred has indeed reached its end, because it is always already completed or, so to speak, expired. Such metaphysics is a catalogue or a system of theories that detaches itself from the present instant by the tendency to look backward. I will call such metaphysics historiographic. Historiographic metaphysics ends up necessarily misrepresenting what thinking is because it conceives time in terms of the timeline. What appears to it to be past instances of philosophizing—such as Plato's *Sophist*, for instance—are, in fact, conditions for thought that need to be reactivated by the philosopher *now*.

In other words, when thinking about the question of whether metaphysics has or has not reached its end we have to distinguish between at least two kinds of metaphysics. We will see that, according to one of them—the kind that I here call historiographic—metaphysics has always already ended. However, there is another, originary metaphysics, which has what we might call a beginning, but most definitely no end. This does not make this kind of thought infinite or unlimited, but rather reflects the necessary novelty of its act—a feature that, as we will see, is of outmost importance to Deleuze. In other words, the fact that originary metaphysics can only happen now places it outside of the timeline. Yet, there is a sense in which originary metaphysics not only has a

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[9] *Ibid*., p. 53, emphasis added.

[10] The introductory exposition to follow is necessarily somewhat abrupt and liable to misinterpretation.

[11] This claim, made by Parmenides in his *Poem* (B3), will be discussed in much more detail in the first chapter. The translation is by Peter Manchester from his book *The Syntax of Time*. Leiden: Brill, 2005, p. 131.

beginning, but also a middle and an end. Its middle is thought articulated in such a way as to cohere with a given social, economic, political, ethnic situation; it is philosophy in its exalted state, as Plato puts it, or, we might say, situated thought. Thought's situation—for instance, its Western or "European" character, to use the most general example, or its intended audience of twenty first century intellectuals—limits it, requiring constant re-articulation. The end of such thought is its ossification, and thus no longer it itself; its end is already its double. So, paradoxically, originary metaphysics generates its other—the other that has always already ended—and yet, it is incorrect to assert that because we suddenly notice the shortcomings and the precariousness of historiographic thought, the possibility of originary metaphysics has been foreclosed.

This is the gist of my argument and in this Introduction I will begin establishing it by developing the distinction between these two kinds of metaphysics, whereas in the subsequent chapters I will mainly focus on the notion of originary metaphysics. The book's conclusion will consider a metaphysician of our own times, Gilles Deleuze. As I already mentioned, Heidegger's thought will serve as an entry point into my work, and, in an important sense, his writings are what inspired this whole project. But, except for the Introduction, Heidegger will remain very much behind the scenes, and although even in these introductory remarks I will often point out the shortcomings of his thought, I am greatly indebted to this thinker for conveying to me the urgency of asking the question of being, as well as for drawing my attention to this particular configuration of the problem of the end of metaphysics. So, in the Introduction I will be using as my conditions for thinking the work of Martin Heidegger, the philosopher who is often credited with being the first to elaborate on the idea that philosophy as metaphysics has reached its end. I will argue that what is peculiar about Heidegger is that even though he does not explicitly make the distinction between originary and historiographic metaphysics, throughout his work he often suggests that such a distinction indeed holds. So, paradoxically, Heidegger who proclaims the end of metaphysics is himself engaged in doing metaphysics. Moreover, I will argue that he identifies as his "*one and only*" question nothing other than originary metaphysics.[12]

Let's turn, then, to Heidegger's ambiguous involvement with metaphysics.

[12] In the *Contributions to Philosophy* he writes: "The question concerning the "meaning" [of being], i.e. in accordance with the elucidation in *Being and Time*, the question concerning grounding the domain of projecting-open—and then, the question of the *truth of be-ing*—is and remains *my* question, and is my *one and only* question…" (*Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowing)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 8).

The Metaphysics that has Ended

In the essay quoted above Heidegger explains that metaphysics "is thought as the truth of what *is* as such in its entirety, and not as the doctrine of any particular thinker."[13] In this sense, as he points out, a philosopher has a position *within* metaphysics, but ultimately metaphysics is something other than a position of this or that thinker, or the sum of several or even all such positions.[14] Metaphysics, then, is the truth of what is in its entirety, the truth that is not reducible to the positions of particular philosophers.

However, if we closely consider the above definition in light of Heidegger's assertion of the end, we will run into the following difficulty: since each thinker holds a position within metaphysics, how is it, then, that Heidegger's assessment of metaphysics is supposed to be able to provide us with a comprehensive picture of it as a whole insofar as he is able to think the end of metaphysics? In fact, there is evidence in Heidegger's own writings that this issue was of a concern for him even if he never adequately addressed it. For instance, in his essay "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" Heidegger feels the need to argue that his project is not arrogant, i.e. it is not putting itself above "the greatness of the [past] thinkers of philosophy" because "its task is only of a preparatory, not of founding character."[15]

Let's approach the same problem from a different perspective. When Heidegger writes about Nietzsche's attempt to overturn metaphysics he says: "Every metaphysics of metaphysics…that in any way whatever attempts to climb beyond metaphysics falls back most surely beneath metaphysics, without knowing where, precisely in so doing, it has fallen."[16] Why doesn't Heidegger's own assessment of metaphysics also "fall beneath?" Presumably, it does not do so because Heidegger is thinking and writing after Nietzsche, i.e. after the end of metaphysics.

In order to clarify from what position Heidegger purports to speak about metaphysics let's first consider how, according to Heidegger, Nietzsche's thought completes metaphysics. This will also enable us to elucidate how exactly Heidegger uses the term "metaphysics."

Regarding one of the most famous of Nietzsche's concepts (and looking ahead to Chapter 1 we can say that it is one of Nietzsche's riddles), "God is dead," Heidegger writes:

> …it is clear that Nietzsche's pronouncement concerning the death of God means the Christian god. But it is no less certain, and it is to be considered in advance, that the terms 'God' and 'Christian god' in Nietzsche's thinking are used to designate the suprasensory world in general. God is the name for the realm of Ideas and ideals. This realm of the suprasensory has been considered since Plato,

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[13] Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead,'" p. 54.

[14] *Ibid*.

[15] Heidegger. *Basic Writings*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993, p. 436.

[16] *Ibid*., p. 109.

> *or more strictly speaking*, since the late Greek and Christian interpretation of Platonic philosophy, to be the true and genuinely real world.[17]

In other words, the impetus behind the desire to overcome metaphysics is traceable to Nietzsche's multifaceted notion of God's death, and, more specifically, to its being our own doing. This, as Heidegger points out, ultimately means that metaphysics as the thinking that posits the suprasensory realm, and thus divides or splits being into hierarchically ordered kinds, is no longer possible. Notice also, that Heidegger specifies that it is not Plato, but rather his interpreters, who attribute highest reality to the suprasensory realm. The significance of this point will come to light later in this essay when I will argue that only when misinterpreted does philosophical thought solidify into hierarchies. But let's further consider the idea of God's death. Ultimately, it turns out to be a realization that we can no longer be justified in splitting being into the more or less real or valuable kinds:

> The pronouncement 'God is dead' means: The suprasensory world is without effective power. It bestows no life. Metaphysics, i.e. for Nietzsche Western philosophy understood as Platonism, is at an end. Nietzsche understands his own philosophy as the countermovement to metaphysics, and that means for him a movement in opposition to Platonism.[18]

With the project of revaluing of all values Nietzsche sees himself as overturning metaphysics. However, as Heidegger points out, this kind of overturning does not mean overcoming. Nietzsche is unable to overcome metaphysics because he too transforms being into a value with his notion of the will to power, thereby setting up yet another hierarchy of beings:

> …in that Being is accorded worth as a value, it is already degraded to a condition posited by the will to power itself. Already from of old, insofar as Being itself has been esteemed at all and thus given worth, it has been despoiled of the dignity of its essence. When the Being of whatever is, is stamped as a value and its essence is thereby sealed off, then within this metaphysics—and that means continually within the truth of what is as such during this age—every way to the experiencing of Being itself is obliterated.[19]

So, even though Nietzsche challenges metaphysics by exposing its tendency to posit the suprasensory realm, he still remains within this metaphysics, because—just like his

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[17] *Ibid*., p. 61.

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] *Ibid*., p. 103. In this work I will not be capitalizing the word "being," even though I will preserve this way of rendering Heidegger's *Sein* in the translations of his work into English. My reason for doing this is very close to that of Charles E. Scott: I would not wish to encourage an attribution of hierarchical values to this notion (cf. "The Appearance of Metaphysics." *A Companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics*. Ed. Richard Polt and Gregory Fried. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001, p. 17).

philosophical predecessors—he does not think being by itself but rather begins from beings; he is too focused on the more or less of beings, or, at least, this is how Heidegger assesses Nietzsche's work.

But regardless of whether such an understanding of Nietzsche is adequate, we begin to discern what Heidegger himself means by "metaphysics." In the sense in which he considers Nietzsche and his predecessors to be metaphysicians, metaphysics for Heidegger is the kind of thinking that overlooks or forgets being by conjuring up ontological hierarchies in which some beings are more, and others less. Moreover, Western metaphysics forgets that it forgets—it is "an oblivion that itself falls into oblivion," as Heidegger calls it in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*, [20] or the "double oblivion."[21] To extend this line of thought a bit further, such double oblivion is also the oblivion of the metaphysical double and of the fact that there is the double of metaphysics.[22] This double is thinking ossified into an inflexible hierarchy, thinking whose borders ceased being borderlands, and so, lost their ability to shift. The double of metaphysics is unable to see the framework under which it is operating, to become aware of its status. This is how Heidegger articulates the same idea:

> In the history of Western thinking, indeed continually from the beginning, what is, is thought in reference to Being; yet the truth of Being remains unthought, and not only is that truth denied to thinking as a possible experience, but Western thinking itself, and indeed in the form of metaphysics, expressly, but nevertheless unknowingly, veils the happening of that denial.[23]

Another formulation of the same idea appears later in the essay:

> metaphysics not only does not think Being itself, but this non-thinking of Being clothes itself in the illusion that it does think Being in the most exalted manner, in that it esteems Being as a value, so that all questions concerning Being become and remain superfluous.[24]

Let's call the notion of metaphysics that Heidegger criticizes the hierarchical metaphysics, which is a kind of historiographic metaphysics. Nietzsche becomes conscious of the depletion of such metaphysics. However, Nietzsche's awareness of this is only partial, because he aims to overturn metaphysics, and thus, has to engage with it directly. To borrow Audrie Lorde's terminology, by using the master's tools Nietzsche

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[20] Martin Heidegger. *Introduction to Metaphysics*. New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2000, p. 20.

[21] This term was suggested by Edward Casey.

[22] An exceptionally engaging work on the function and significance of one kind of double, the kolossos, is Jean-Pierre Vernant's essay "The Figuration of the Invisible and the Psychological Category of the Double: The Kolossos" in *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*. New York: Zone Books, 2006, pp. 321-332.

[23] Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead,'" p. 56.
[24] *Ibid*., p. 104-105.

ends up only fortifying the master's house. As a result, he too belongs to this metaphysical tradition, even if in the function of the one who completes it.

Heidegger, on the other hand, stands apart from such metaphysics precisely because he is fully aware that its framework is flawed, i.e. that only beings are made thinkable within it and not being itself. In his 1957 lecture "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics" he compares his philosophical method to that of Hegel: "For us, the character of the conversation with the history of thinking is no longer *Aufhebung* (elevation), but the step back."[25] In other words, Heidegger realizes that the hierarchical metaphysics cannot be overturned or sublated. Instead, one has to distance herself from it. However, Heidegger is also aware of the fact that one cannot absolutely disengage from metaphysics, and so he makes an ingenious move by claiming that his role in relation to metaphysics will consist of inquiring into what metaphysics is: "The step back thus moves out of metaphysics into the essential nature of metaphysics."[26] That is, the step back entails a certain involvement with metaphysics, but, presumably, the kind that would not get entangled in repeating the mistake of thinking being from beings. Such stepping back is Heidegger's separation from the history of metaphysics; the separation that enables him to criticize, to take in at a glance the whole of Western tradition. Let's consider, then, the outcome of Heidegger's inquiry into the "essential nature of metaphysics."

> Nowhere are we confronted by a thinking that thinks the truth of Being itself and therewith thinks truth itself as Being. This is not thought even where pre-Platonic thinking, as the beginning of Western thinking, prepares for the unfolding of metaphysics in Plato and Aristotle…. The history of Being begins, and indeed necessarily, *with the forgetting of Being*.[27]

In this passage Heidegger argues that the forgetting of being occurred at the very inception of Western philosophy. Already Parmenides, for example, sets up the philosophical framework in such a way that it predisposes us to forgetting. This tendency is carried over to and amplified in Plato's thought, and then further exaggerated in Aristotle. The process continues all the way to Nietzsche, who overturns the hierarchy without destroying it as such, i.e. without being able to gain a critical distance in relation to this framework. In other words, the Greeks start out with the intuition of being, yet fail to pose the fundamental question, or fail to account for be-ing (*Seyn*)—the "fundamental happening" that enables us to have access to being or to think being.[28] That is, Heraclitus

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[25] Heidegger. "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics." *Identity and Difference*. New York: Harper and Row, 1969, p. 49.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 51.

[27] Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead,'" p. 109.

[28] According to Thomas Sheehan "As Heidegger sees it, there were strong intimations of *Ereignis* in pre-Socratic philosophy, and in *Introduction to Metaphysics* he finds virtually all the elements of this topic in the texts of Heraclitus and Parmenides. Even these thinkers, however, failed to pose the fundamental question of *Ereignis* either explicitly or in its fullness" ("*Kehre* and *Ereignis*: A Prolegomenon to *Introduction to Metaphysics*," *A Companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 14).

and Parmenides thought in the "happening," although they were never aware of it, whereas the later Western thinkers failed to even participate in this "fundamental" event.

Here is how Heidegger articulates the same idea in his *Contributions to Phislosophy*: "If we inquire into beings as beings (ὄν ἦ ὄν) and thus inquire into the being of beings in *this* starting point and direction, then whoever inquires stands in the realm of *the* question that guides the beginning of Western philosophy and its history up to its end in Nietzsche…. Being here means *beingness*."[29] This question Heidegger calls the guiding-question, and continues: "On the other hand, if one inquires into be-ing, the approach here is not from beings, i.e., from this and that being respectively—and also not from beings as such in the whole—but rather the leap is enacted into the *truth*…of be-ing itself."[30] This, according to Heidegger, is the grounding-question. "Going from the guiding-question to the grounding-question, there is never an immediate, equi-directional and continual process that once again applies the guiding-question (to being); rather, there is only a leap, i.e., the necessity of an *other* beginning."[31] So, metaphysics at its best asks the guiding, but never the grounding question, and it is only with Heidegger that such a question is even formulated. Quite an assertion! It is no wonder that even Heidegger himself detected an air of ignorance in this claim.[32] But apart form the implications that might be psychologically, but not philosophically interesting, there are two important observations that we can make about such a move. As will become much more evident in the course of this work, this is Heidegger's way of freeing himself from the burden of the tradition, i.e. his method of thinking now.

Secondly, under such a view as I am showing is characteristic for Heidegger, every instance of philosophizing is treated instrumentally or causally. That is, the thought of Parmenides, for instance, is considered to be preparing the ground for Plato's thought, and, in turn, Plato's writings perform the same function for Aristotle, etc. When operating with such a conceptual framework one is dangerously close to finding meaning in what Parmenides does only insofar as he is seen to be somebody who prefigures the way for Plato. In other words, we end up conceive philosophy as a progression of theories that developed out of those that preceded them, and as therefore meaningful not in themselves, but only insofar as they reflect what happened before them and inform the thought of the philosophers to come.

Such an understanding of metaphysics is historiographic for it relies on the conception of time as a linear succession of discrete "nows," or, better, of discrete instances on a timeline. Even though Heidegger, unlike Hegel, does not conceive this movement as the progressive development of thought, he still considers it to be a succession of moments that move us further and further away from being. It is no wonder then that such understanding of metaphysics results in the assertion of its end.

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[29] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 52.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 52-53.

[31] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 53.

[32] Cf. Heidegger. "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking." *Basic Writings*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993, p. 436ff.

That is, Heidegger is bound to maintain that metaphysics is over because he conceives it in historiographic fashion, hence the need to step outside or distance himself from it.

To put it a bit differently, Heidegger slips into conceiving metaphysics temporally and that is ultimately why he is unable to think through or hold in mind the distinction that I am proposing in this work. Consider, for instance the following assertion: "For philosophy has constantly and always asked about the ground of beings. With this question it had its inception, in this question it will find its end…"[33] What Heidegger overlooks here is that there is a kind of philosophy that simply cannot have an end, though at times he realizes this full well: when distinguishing philosophy from worldview he points out that philosophy is "always a beginning," whereas worldview "is always an end, mostly very drawn out and as such never known."[34] And when discussing philosophy as thinking of be-ing he acknowledges that it "does not *come to a stop*."[35]

As a final confirmation of Heidegger's ambiguous relationship to metaphysics let us consider the 1943 postscript to the essay "What Is Metaphysics?" in which Heidegger distinguishes between beings and being. Heidegger begins by asserting that the "question "What is metaphysics?" questions beyond metaphysics. It springs from a thinking that has already entered into the overcoming of metaphysics."[36] Yet, if we read on a much more nuanced picture emerges:

> All comportment toward beings thus attests to a knowledge of being, yet at the same time to an inability to stand of its own accord within the law of truth of this knowledge. This truth is a truth about beings. Metaphysics is the history of this truth. It says what beings are in bringing to a concept the beingness of beings. In the beingness of beings, metaphysics thinks being, yet without being able to ponder the truth of being in the manner of its own thinking. Metaphysics everywhere moves in the realm of the truth of being, which truth, metaphysically speaking, remains its unknown and ungrounded ground. Granted, however, that not only do beings stem from being, but that being too, in a still more originary manner, itself rests within its own truth and that the truth of being unfolds in its essence as the being of truth, then it is necessary to ask what metaphysics is in its ground. This question must think metaphysically and at the same time think out of the ground of metaphysics, i.e. in a manner that is no longer metaphysical. Such questioning remains ambivalent in an essential sense.[37]

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[33] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 26.

[34] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 26.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 40.

[36] "Postscript to 'What Is Metaphysics?'" *Pathmarks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 231-232.

[37] *Ibid.*

This passage gives us a more profound understanding of the metaphysics that Heidegger criticizes. Even though the history of Western philosophy does not ask the question of being, its thinking is nevertheless grounded or "moves in the realm of" this truth. Heidegger himself is able to think the essence of metaphysics because being has been and is the ground of this metaphysics. In other words, Heidegger's thought is not *radically* different from what Western philosophers have been doing all along. If this were not the case, then how could he even begin to imagine, let alone formulate, the grounding question? Thus, the tradition cannot be seen only as that which needs to be overcome.

So, in a sense, Heidegger never steps out of metaphysics, and he admits it in the quotation above, since, after all, there is no outside of originary metaphysics. Because Heidegger recognizes the ambiguous nature of the question that asks about the ground of metaphysics, he thereby admits the equivocity of his own philosophical project: his stepping out or away from metaphysics can never be accomplished. The reason for this is twofold: there is no outside, or no ground from which to ask non-metaphysically about metaphysics, and, secondly, one can never completely disengage from historiographic metaphysics, for, after all, it is the double of the kind of thinking that Heidegger wants to do. As I mentioned above, historiographic metaphysics is the petrified, silent, or dead thought that is a symbol and not an image of its originary ground. In other words, there is no resemblance between the two kinds,[38] yet, a connection between them does exist: the historiographic metaphysics is, like kolossos, an "ambiguous presence that is the sign of an absence."[39] In other words, even though we should be careful about insisting on too strict a parallel between the Ancient Greek phenomenon of kolossos and the historiographic metaphysics, the following observation springs to mind: just like kolossos is a sign of a person who has vanished and whose body has never been found, so too historiographic metaphysics is a sign of the vanishing of metaphysics, and just like kolossos in no way resembles that person, yet is able to successfully point to her absence, while its own presence or its own existence is highly questionable, so too the historiographic metaphysics does not resemble originary thinking, and yet motions towards it.

Criticism and Creation

So, what is this ossified metaphysics that Heidegger attempts to step away from? It is the long tradition of academic analyses that has very little if anything to do with the original intuition or fundamental happening of the pre-Socratics, to the point of having degenerated into the "empirical science of man, of all that can become for man the

[38] Cf. Vernant's essay on the kolossos in *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, p. 322.

[39] *Ibid*., p. 323.

experiential object of technology."[40] Such a transformation of philosophy into the independent sciences Heidegger considers its "legitimate completion."[41] He acknowledges this fundamental happening, although he maintains that it "has not been explicitly thought"[42] or understood and needs to be "put into proper perspective" in order to enact the *other* beginning.[43]

Considering today's all-pervasive double oblivion as well as the single oblivion of the Greeks, how is Heidegger able to remember being? He is able to do this only because the grounding question is always being asked when we are thinking, and only afterwards can it become distorted or forgotten.

Heidegger opposes only what *seems* to be metaphysics. This is what he claims:

> In the domain of the other beginning there is neither "ontology" nor anything at all like "metaphysics." No "ontology," because the guiding question no longer sets the standard or determines the range. No "metaphysics," because one does not proceed at all from beings as extant or from object as known (Idealism), in order then to *step over to* something else. Both of these are merely transitional names for initiating and understanding at all.[44]

In fact, if we understand ontology and metaphysics as they are defined here, then indeed we have to recognize that these are simply outdated names. But—and this is crucial—they have always been outdated. However, to reduce the whole Western thought to them is not only to treat it instrumentally, but also to end up making philosophically uninteresting observations about it.

For the Heidegger who conceives the history of Western thinking in terms of decline the texts of the philosophical tradition become meaningful only as instances of oblivion, i.e. they take on an entirely negative connotation. Such a notion of metaphysics, as I will show in a moment, is founded upon the attitude of uncreative criticism. Of course, Heidegger is a creative thinker, but his creativity is explained by to the fact that he himself does not always act on the historiographic understanding of metaphysics that he so frequently encourages. The distinction between creative and uncreative criticism is found in the work of the thinker whom we will encounter at length only in the Conclusion, Gilles Deleuze.

In the book co-authored with Felix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guttari write: "If one can still be a Platonist, Cartesian, or Kantian today, it is because one is justified in thinking that their concepts can be reactivated in our problems and

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[40] Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," p. 434.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] *Ibid*., p. 437.

[43] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 41.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 41-42.

inspire those concepts that need to be created."[45] In other words, the fruitful way of reading Plato is by focusing on how he can help us to address our own concerns, thus re-actualizing his thought or treating him as our contemporary co-thinker and not as a "past master" who can be either revered or razed to the ground.

That is, when we approach the history of philosophy in a creative way we are actively engaging with the problems of our own times while turning to our philosophical predecessors for signs or pathmarks that might guide us to our own answer. Such an attitude leaves no room for historiography even though it inevitably results in it at the very moment in which thinking is treated as past. Under this originary conception philosophy has no "past" and no "masters." Instead, thinking is happening right now, and Plato's thought becomes one with this thinking. Granted, the conditions for philosophical thinking have changed over the past two thousand years; the milieu out of which we think is undoubtedly different from that of Plato or even Hiedegger. For example, one of the circumstances that delimit the now of our thought in an explicit manner is the idea that the indisputable authority of Western rationality can no longer be legitimately upheld. However, this thought itself is not new, merely the manner in which it is expressed, and Parmenides, for instance, recognized its centrality. This condition of thinking gains prominence or becomes explicit due to certain historical factors. Circumstances such as Western imperialism, capitalism, fascism, Stalinism highlighted it and brought it to the center of academic discussions. So we can say that this idea is empirically significant today. But if we focus exclusively on such empirical circumstances we will be reducing philosophy to historiography by assuming that thinking is a result of a certain configuration of beings, whereas it is an event that breaks causal chains. So that if we treat the work of our predecessors as a set of ready answers, especially to our own questions, and upon not finding such accuse them of shortcomings, we will be criticizing in a uncreative way.

Deleuze asks: "What is the best way to follow the great philosophers? Is it to repeat what they said or *do what they did*, that is, create concepts for problems that necessarily change?"[46] Let's consider this distinction, which, in a moment, we will also encounter in Heidegger's work. Here Deleuze places emphasis on the creative aspect of a philosophical act. Simply repeating what Plato said is repeating without creation, which essentially means assembling lists and registers of ideas insofar as they have already occurred or happened. This claim seems straightforward enough, but let's intensify it with the following consideration. Repeating leaves the door wide open for criticism that does not engage with the philosopher and her ideas, i.e. the criticism that is uncreative.

> To criticize is to establish that a concept vanishes when it is thrust into a new milieu, losing some of its components, or acquiring others that transform it. But those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished

[45] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. *What Is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 28.

[46] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 28.

> concept without being able to give it the forces it needs to return to life, are the plague of philosophy.[47]

In other words, because all is one, or because the appearances limit being, our thought is petrified and turns into its own double. So, criticizing thinking on these grounds is simply meaningless.

So, precisely because we know that thought ossifies we cannot treat it that way. For regarding a philosophical thought as completed entails taking on a position outside of it. Such distancing oneself from thought is criticism without creation, since it relegates a philosophical act to the past, and therefore, renounces every possibility to engage with this act. Seeing the whole of metaphysics in such a manner inevitably leads to the idea that metaphysics has reached its end.

Both Heidegger and Deleuze quite often undertake such criticizing, and thus, set as their goal an overcoming or disengaging from the tradition. But there is no need to overcome the past if there is only the present, if we are treating Plato's thought happening now. Even though both Heidegger and Deleuze are at times aware of this, they are still too wedded to the idea of Western thought being an adversary that needs to be destroyed. Deleuze seems to be especially prone to a polemic relationship with philosophy in his early works, Heidegger in his writings after *Being and Time*. For example, in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze claims that his goal is to overturn Platonism.[48] Occasionally, he admits that the Platonism he strives to overcome is not Plato's thought but a certain interpretation of this thought, the interpretation which posits two distinct kinds of being (just as we have seen Heidegger make a similar distinction in his essay on Nietzsche). In the book *What Is Philosophy?*, written towards the end of his career, Deleuze abandons the goal of reversing metaphysics. But even in *Difference and Repetition* where such a goal is stated explicitly, Deleuze, being a philosopher, is far from accomplishing it.

Heidegger, for his part, at times he even acknowledges that there is another sense of metaphysics. Apart from thinking about "the truth of what is" or the truth of beings, there is metaphysics that tries to "put Being into words."[49] For instance, in *The Question Concerning Technology* Heidegger writes: "Any metaphysical thinking is onto-logy or it is nothing at all,"[50] and in the *Introduction to Metaphysics* he distinguishes his definition of ontology from the traditional one in the following way.

> [Conventional ontology] designates development of the traditional doctrine of beings into a philosophical discipline and a branch of the philosophical system. But the traditional doctrine is the academic analysis and ordering of what for Plato and Aristotle, and again for Kant, was a *question*, though to be sure a question that was no longer *originary*.[51]

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[47] *Ibid*., p. 28.

[48] In the Conclusion I will show that this is a sophistic move on Deleuze's part.

[49] Cf. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 43.

[50] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, p. 55.

[51] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 43.

Here again we encounter Heidegger's idea that the thinkers in the history of philosophy were not inquiring into the truth of being. Yet, he does acknowledge the difference between thinking now and treating thought as past. That is, even though Parmenides and Kant, Aristotle and Hegel were not questioning in an originary way, they were still actively engaged in thinking. For instance, in the *Contributions to Philosophy* Heidegger admits that when Kant "calls space and time 'intuitions', that is within this history only a weak attempt to rescue what is ownmost to space and time."[52] What Heidegger means here by questioning approximates the present tense characteristic of metaphysical thinking that I call originary. In opposition to such active engagement, Heidegger realizes, there are procedures of ordering past or completed thoughts, of codifying thinking into doctrines, or of establishing elaborate systematic structures. Such procedures both stem from and reinforce the historiographic conception of metaphysics, by focusing on the way in which certain thinkers are a part of a certain cultural development or structure called "Western philosophy," i.e. by reducing thinking to its situation. Thus, it is precisely such orderings that encourage criticism without creation ultimately leading to the conclusion of the end of philosophy. Uncreative criticism turns thought into academic analyses.

Heidegger admits that besides such an approach there is another ontology or metaphysics. For him it "means the effort to put Being into words, and to do so by passing through the question of how it stands with Being (and not just beings as such)."[53] Such an act is so different from academic analysis that Heidegger prefers not to use the term "ontology" at all in his work because "[t]wo modes of questioning which, as is only now becoming clearer, are worlds apart should not bear the same name."[54]

But preferring not to use the term is not the same as not doing ontology or metaphysics. It is clear from the above distinction that Heidegger is engaged in metaphysical thinking, and, more specifically, that of non-historiographic kind. So, one could accuse Heidegger of criticizing without creation if it were not for the fact that he himself does not follow through with his explicit claim that metaphysics has reached its end. Not only does Heidegger try to put being into words, but he also engages with the "past" thinkers in a creative way. The following passage beautifully confirms the point that history of philosophy needs to be approached with the intention of reactivating what appears to be a past thought:

> The attempt to experience the truth of that word concerning the death of God without illusions is something different from an espousing of Nietzsche's philosophy. Were the latter our intention, thinking would not be served through such assent. We show respect for a thinker only when *we think*. This demands that we think *everything essential that is thought in his thought*.[55]

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[52] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 49.

[53] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 43.

[54] *Ibid*., p. 44.

[55] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, p. 99, emphasis added.

That is, metaphysics in the originary sense involves thinking with another philosopher. And here Heidegger, just like Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, thinks together with Nietzsche, i.e. treats Nietzsche's work as the conditions for his thought. Such an approach allows for criticism, of course, but the kind that engages with its interlocutor. Such criticism presupposes that a given human being is first of all a philosopher, i.e. that she is indeed thinking being, she is in the midst of a "fundamental happening," yet unable to sustain thought's intensity, at certain points slips, or is not able to adequately articulate the thought, to most effectively embed it into a situation. In other words, creative criticism starts with a presupposition that a given philosopher *is* indeed *asking* the question of the meaning of being (if not, what would be the point of engaging with her thought?), but that at certain moments or junctures he or she *was* not able to maintain the effort of this question. If such creative aspect is not present, we will end up upholding the historiographic double of metaphysics. This double has always already died—after all, it only points to an absence, but this says nothing about originary metaphysics.

It is clear that more often than not Heidegger himself is a creative philosopher who thinks being, i.e. a metaphysician in the originary sense. [56]

So, it turns out that Heidegger wants to distance himself from historiographic metaphysics that is always and only concerned with beings, whether in the form of academic analysis or in philosophy's branching off into the disconnected sciences. However, this kind of metaphysics is not originary, and it is erroneous and uncreative to see Western thought exclusively as historiography. Yet, it is never possible to completely dispense with the ossified metaphysics because thought vanishes, and needs to be recalled by means of its petrified signs.

Originary Metaphysics

So, let us consider originary metaphysics in more detail—the kind of thinking that can never reach its end. Because in the distinction that I have been developing here—the

[56] In this respect it makes no difference whether there was the turn or *Kehre* in Heidegger's thinking (**as**, for instance, Thomas Sheehan argues in "*Kehre* and *Ereignis*: A Prolegomenon to *Introduction to Metaphysics*"). That is, even if we distinguish between *Sein* in the sense of the being of beings and *Seyn* or be-ing, where be-ing is "the happening that enables Dasein to have access" to the being of beings, it is clear that Heidegger is still doing originary metaphysics. The quotation is from Richard Polt's essay "The Question of Nothing" (p. 58-58). Both essays appear in *A companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics*.

distinction between metaphysics that cannot end, and the metaphysics that has always already ended—time is at stake, we need to clarify first of all what time is.[57]

For this purpose, let us recall one of Heraclitus' sayings: "Immortals are mortal, mortals immortal, living the others' death, dead in the other's life."[58]

Whatever other interpretations this fragment might warrant, I would like to focus on the following consideration: we, the human beings, are both mortal and immortal. On the one hand, each one of us has his or her mortal lifespan that can be represented as a timeline with a beginning, our date of birth and end, our date of death. However, looked at in another way, and, more precisely, in a philosophical way, a life as a succession of instances with a starting and end point simply does not make any sense. Its inconsistency is revealed through paradoxes such as Zeno's or through Augustine's reflections on temporality.[59] From the philosophical point of view we cannot be satisfied with life being such a linear succession, i.e. we realize that we also have to be other than mortal. Heraclitus calls this aspect immortality.

The second part of the saying "living the other's death, dead in the other's life" can be taken to mean that as immortals we are able to live what seems like death to mortals, and as mortals we are dead for the immortal life. In other words, as immortals we live that which is inaccessible to the mortals, that which from the mortal perspective seems like the absence of life. But because "immortals are mortal" we can also exchange the terms in the second part of the saying to read: mortals are living the death of immortals and immortals are dead in the mortals' life. Even though it seems to be counterintuitive or even contradictory to attribute death to immortals, under the present framework we can understand it to mean that when our mortal aspect "dominates" then the immortal one necessarily vanishes or is "suppressed," although not lost or eliminated altogether. Here Plato's image of turning the whole ψυχή or soul around[60] comes to mind: we are already immortal while being mortal (even though our immortal aspect is or appears to be "dead"), and all we have to do in order to realize our immortality is redirect our gaze or change the way in which we understand the world around us.[61] The immortal aspect, then, is absent from the kind of life that mortals lead, and vice versa, although we can "switch" from existing as mortals to being immortal. Such turning of "inner vision" is brought about by the event of being, i.e. by that which is not reducible to the circumstances of its happening, for example, to our cultural or psychological situation.

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[57] In this clarification I will be drawing upon the notion of time as well as the notion of eternity that is paradigmatically time-like as it is developed by Peter Manchester in *The Syntax of Time* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), who follows Plotinus's "On Eternity and Time," *Ennead* III 7 [45], 1:17-25.

[58] Heraclitus, Fragment 62. Cf. Charles Kahn. *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 70-71.

[59] Cf. Augustine. *Confessions*. Tr. Henry Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 221-246.

[60] Cf. Plato, *Republic*, Book VII, 518c-d.

[61] Of course, such change in never permanent: we constantly slip into or revert to the mortal way of being; thus, Plato realizes, education is a continuous process.

The fact that immortals are mortal or mortals immortal entails oneness that is not an identity: the difference between the two is most significant. Ultimately it is tied to the two different ways in which time is understood. For mortals time appears to be a succession of discrete instances that has a beginning and an end, hence our finitude. Immortals, on the other hand, move in the inner interval of time and thus are able to access eternity. The oneness of mortals and immortals is tied to the fact that we, the human beings, are both, as well as to the fact that it is erroneous to treat time as a sequence of causally connected "nows."

At this point I would like to take a moment to distinguish eternity from the everlasting, since everlasting has the meaning of that which "always was, is, and will be." Therefore, the everlasting is in time. We also have to distinguish eternity from the infinite. Although the connotations associated with the notion of infinity changed throughout the centuries, and for Plotinus it acquired the positive meaning of the inexhaustible, in Ancient Greek thought it carries negative implications of the indefinite, and thus, unintelligible or unthinkable. In this work I will be siding with the Ancients in thinking of eternity as other than infinite, and thus as knowable.

So, taken philosophically, time is not a timeline, not a succession of discrete instances, but rather an interval, in which we access being either through thinking (and that is when we are doing philosophy), or through light (as in photography), or by means of sound (music), etc.

The following consideration will become fully understandable only in light of Chapter 1. Yet, it needs to appear here; untimely. After all, philosophy is always untimely.

In Parmenidean fashion we can begin by saying that there is only one kind of time—time as an interval, and it is not possible for it not to be. Now, there is no future or past interval of time. This interval can be said only in the present.

In addition, we should be cautious around the mortal conception of time, i.e. time as a succession of instances on a line, and so, time conceived spatially. After all, thinking of time via a timeline is a category mistake, for in this case we are trying to represent time spatially, as a sequence of "nows."

Although we are warned against this erroneous specialization of time, we cannot say that time in this sense is not. After all, we are confronted with it daily: we refer to a chronological table, we memorize the date of French Revolution, we make a note of the next month's appointment with a dentist.

To begin explaining what the interval of time is the following phenomenological consideration might be useful—an example of an experience of such an interval:

> Consider reading a book that one finds completely compelling, that draws one along in apparently inexhaustible attentiveness and interest. Hours can pass unregistered; it can be shocking to discover how much time has passed, and how meaningless that fact seems compared with the inner composure and vividness of the interval.[62]

[62] Manchester. "Eternity." *Encyclopedia of Religion*. Ed. Mircea Eliade. New York: Macmillan and Co., 1987.

It is in the interval of time that the act of transformation and turning occurs. This act occasionally appears under the name of unforgetting, or ἀνάμνησις. The name of the interval of time is "now," and it is precisely in this now of time that the philosopher intuits being, or does originary metaphysics.

Time is two-dimensional in the sense that it both harmonizes beings and constitutes a one with eternity. Thus, eternity is always with time, although not in time.[63] Time is neither one of the beings nor is it eternity, and yet it is not a third thing completely different from these two. Instead, it is that which communicates between eternal being and beings. Thus, we can say that time leads to eternity, and the philosopher is able to go "backwards" with time to eternity,[64] since eternity eternity is paradigmatically time-like. The philosopher can transform configurations of beings having experienced eternity in the interval of time.[65]

Eternity is first in relation to time, but only ontologically, i.e. no value judgments are attached to this "first," and most certainly no later or earlier is meant here, i.e. mortal thinking of successions is inappropriate here. Thus, the relationship between eternity and time is not hierarchical. Of course, articulating the interval of time necessarily entails an entanglement with mortal temporality. That is why we are warned against it: as a result of this entanglement our articulations ossify and the hierarchies of historiographic metaphysics develop. For instance, when discussing time and eternity, Plotinus chooses to begin from eternity, and describes the downward movement in which time originates, although he does admit that it is equally valid to begin the other way around.[66] In doing so, Plotinus establishes a provisional hierarchy. Such hierarchy only provides us with signs, and does not prescribe any fixed order. After all, "[t]he way up and down is one and the same."[67] Thus, to say that the philosopher in thinking being or in doing metaphysics moves up from the interval of time to eternity is also to say that she moves

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[63] Cf. *ibid.*

[64] There is time as that which keeps turning backwards or downwards on itself: time is "a downward arrival *into itself*" (Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 73). What does this mean? One of the ways in which we can understand the 'downward' tendency of time is by resorting to Plotinus' treatise *On Eternity and Time*. Using the medium of a myth Plotinus explains that time *fell out* of eternity as a result of nature's and soul's movement. This falling out, as Manchester argues, is best understood in the geometrical sense of projection (cf. *ibid*., p. 76ff, and especially p. 80). However, endorsing such explanation here would involve introducing too many new terms, and for now I will have to content myself with a Parmenidean account. However, I would like to point out that I would I prefer to use the word "backwards" from Parmenides' *Poem* rather than the Plotinian "downwards" when speaking about the two-dimensional character of time in order to emphasize that there is no set hierarchy between eternity and time and beings.

[65] Time is a way in which being is one with beings. In other words, time is the way in which beings are able to be. But time is not a third thing alongside being and beings: it is the non-spatial interval in which being is limited by beings. But what does it mean to say that time is an interval? The interval of time is not a length or a distance, but rather a proportion that harmonizes (Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 48). In this sense time is like a musical scale in which the musical tones are harmoniously arranged according to a specific proportion. Time too orchestrates different beings within the interval that is itself. While being one, time is two-dimensional. One of its dimensions is the interval in which different beings are harmonized, and another is the dimension that allows for the communication between beings and being. The two-dimensional character of time coheres or holds together in the now.

[66] Cf. Plotinus, "On Eternity and Time," *Ennead* III 7,1.

[67] Fragment 60. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, pp.74-75.

down. Plotinus shows us the way in which he was once able to understand the relationship between time and eternity, but our own way need not be the same as his. Because time and eternity are one while being different, we can either think time through eternity or eternity through time. In light of the discussion that is about to unfold in the first chapter of this work, it is important to note that Plotinus uses the medium of myth to explore the relationship between eternity and time. It is in this way that he invites us to participate in his thought; we can reactivate for ourselves the truth of the relationship between time and eternity mythologically.

So, the way of mortal time is the necessarily confusing and thus unseemly way to speak about eternity. Although we have direct access to eternity insofar as we philosophize, we spend most of our lives moving within the causal laws of the timeline. In such instances we are—both for better and for worse—mortals.

Even though in Chapter 2 these terms will acquire much more precision, let me suggest provisional definitions for some of the notions that have been emerging in this Introduction.

When a human being is the mortal he or she moves among beings that appear to stand in unchanging causal relationships to each other. For instance, as a mortal I am unable to travel to most of the countries in the world without first undergoing an arduous and too often humiliating process of acquiring a visa—a process during which I am turned into an object, into nothing more than a potential immigrant. In a sense, then, the mortal is the one who is objectified, and objectifies others. Or, to formulate it in terms of the current discussion, the mortal is the one who—not realizing what time is—thinks of himself and of other beings in terms of successions and causal connections, i.e. in terms of a timeline. That is, the mortal does not know that the present arrangement of beings can be radically altered, he is unable to envision a dramatic re-configuration of the world. Instead, he tries to adhere to the laws of successions, and make use of beings just as they appear.

The philosopher, on the other hand, is the one who realizes that time is an interval in which beings are ordered, and thus, is able to recreate the arrangement of beings according to being. The philosopher is able to experience an event by thinking it through, and so, realizes that the laws of causality do not apply to being.

Soon we will also encounter the sophist. He is the shadow of the philosopher—the shadow that calls out the non-being of time as the interval.

The human being is all of these aspects, and often many more. Yet, since just like other beings, the human being is also ordered, he or she appears as a specific configuration of these aspects, in which one of them usually dominates while others are suppressed. Athough our configuration is constantly open to change or mutable, within the interval of time I can only be the philosopher, or, more generally, the immortal.

So, the philosopher is one kind of Heraclitus' "immortal," while the sophist merely seems to be the philosopher or immortal, and that only to the mortal in us.

Perhaps the main distinction upon which this work is relying is that between being and beings, or, as I will refer to them more often, the appearances. Right away I would like to point out two things. First of all, although the difference between the two is an actual one, this difference is not ontological, i.e. there are no levels or kinds of being. Secondly, the notion of beings or appearances includes everything that is except for being, whereas being includes everything. For instance, the appearances include a tree, a

car, a shadow of a tree, an image of a tree in the water, a definition of a tree, a painting of a tree, etc., apart from being. Whereas being includes being and all the appearances. I will call this paradoxical arrangement complex oneness.[68]

For the time being the above definitions should suffice, although they will be gradually elaborated and refined. Let me turn next to the reason why the interval of time is called the "now." Exploring the now of time will enable me to better elaborate what I mean by the interval of time. I borrow this name, as well as the way to understand it, from Manchester's reading of Aristotle. [69]

First of all I would like to note that the name "now" is quite an opportune one, because it picks out the present moment as opposed to a past or future one. Thus, by referring to the interval of time as "the now" we are immediately able to provoke correct associations. So, this name of time functions as a sign for the mortal. If by attempting to philosophize we are trying to lift by the hair, a la Baron von Munchausen, the philosopher out of the mortal, then speaking about time as "the now" is a shrewd way to begin (the way of μῆτις). As will become apparent later, such a strategic approach is characteristic of the exalted philosopher.

Let's take a look at Aristotle, then. Manchester shows that in *Physics*, Aristotle has three formulations of time. The third one is the logical formulation, or the *logos* of time that declares time to be the number of motion. The first one is the nature (φύσις) of time insofar as it appears in the phenomena of motion: "the nature of time is that with respect to which we discern the faster and the slower in motions."[70] The second one is the phenomenological identification of time, on which the first two formulations rely:

> But we define/identify/horizon [ὁρίζομεν] by the other and other, grasping them and something in between different to them; for when we apprehend the extremes different from the middle and the Soul says the Nows two, the one beforehand, the other afterward, then and this we affirm to be time.
> For what is defined/identified/horizoned by the Now seems to be time.[71]

Saying "the Nows two," according to Aristotle, lets time appear. That is, time is something different from the "other and other" or from the sequence of beings. Instead, time is the interval, this "in between" of beings and, phenomenologically speaking, appears to us when we say the now:

> 'Saying the Nows two'…can be illustrated from the Greek word for Now, νυν. Νυν is spelled *nu, upsilon, nu*. *Nu* is a 'continuative' consonant; it can be

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[68] Thus, the ontological formula suggested by a Ukrainian philosopher Andrij Gurmak is 1=1+1. Cf. *Cossack Mamai: A History of Art*, forthcoming.

[69] Manchester argues in the third chapter of *The Syntax of Time* (contra Heidegger, Hegel and Derrida) that Aristotle's treatment of "now" is in no way reducible to the notion of the sequence of nows, each of which either succeeds or precedes any given one.

[70] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 89; cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, 10: 218b16.

[71] Aristotle, *Physics*, 11: 219a25-30. Translation by Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, Appendix 1, p.157.

> repeated without interruption of sound, laying out a kind of flux of potential Nows: *nununununununu*…. But to 'say Now', to mark out Now as a phenomenon of time, it does not suffice to pronounce only *one* of the Ns. We must pronounce *two* of them in such a way as to include the Y between them as well.[72]

Again, this is a phenomenological definition of time, and in it the now or νῦν serves as a convenient or seemly sign that demarcates the limits of time, thus making apparent the interval.[73] Once within this interval, our thought is no longer subject to causal laws, and so, is not reducible to the circumstances of the everyday life. For instance, Plato's creations cannot be exhaustively explained through reference to his economic or social status, his cultural background, or his gender. The interval is the thinking of oneness, and so, there are no hierarchies in it. All the hierarchical constructions result from adapting the thought of the interval to the mortal temporal sequences, or articulating them in terms of the mortal laws.

We are now in the position to discuss what it means to say that metaphysics is originary insofar as it can happen only now, and does not have a past or a future.

The time of originary metaphysics is the interval of time demarcated by the now. Since this interval is not a part of a temporal sequence, but is rather in-between its joints, originary metaphysics can have neither past nor future, but only present; it can occur only now. Thus, such metaphysical thinking is not a product or an effect of the circumstances surrounding the interval, i.e. the current opinions or beings. Since the interval is not a part of a sequence, its happening—phenomenologically defined as the act of saying "the nows two"—is an act of the philosopher, but only insofar as she apprehends or thinks what already is. In other words, the interval is something in common between the thinker and the event.[74]

No being can cause the mortal to become the philosopher. Or, rather, any being can serve as a conduit for philosophical thinking: a really bad Hollywood movie or a film by Andrei Tarkovsky. Yet, under certain circumstances philosophical thinking is more likely to occur. For example, Plato's dialogues or Heraclitean sayings predispose their listeners or readers to apprehending the interval of time, since both of these philosophers, while articulating their thinking from within the interval, deliberately structured their writings is such a way as to enable others to enter it, and, I should add, to enable themselves to think in it again. After all, being needs to be thought always anew: "Philosophy is a happening that must at all times work out Being for itself anew."[75] At a different point Heidegger writes that "when it comes to be-ing and its truth, one must begin again and again"[76] and "every beginning is unsurpassable, in being encountered it must be placed again and again into the uniqueness of inceptuality and thus into its unsurpassable fore-grasping. When this encountering is inceptual, then it is originary—

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[72] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 94.

[73] Cf. *ibid*., p. 95.

[74] In Chapter 1 I will briefly discuss Heraclitus' notion of ξυνός or common.

[75] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 90.

[76] Heidegger, *The Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 13.

but this necessarily as *other* beginning." And he adds that "*Only what is unique is retrievable and repeatable*."[77]

True, time *appears* to the mortal as past, present and future, yet it *is* only now. Metaphysics is thinking being in the interval of time where the notions of past and future are inapplicable, where there is only the now of time. It is from within this interval that the philosopher is able to re-order or re-articulate beings that appear to be a part of temporal sequences. This is what I meant earlier by saying that one of the dimensions of time is that it orders beings: the chaos of the appearances is harmonized by time, and due to the incessantly changing makeup of chaos such ordering needs to be constantly reiterated anew. What does not change, of course, is the interval itself, resulting in a homeostatic system in which motion and changelessness form one. Here comes to mind an observation made by Patočka: "to reiterate does not mean to do the same thing that was already here once before; to reiterate means to attempt to, *through new ways*, new words, new methods, say the same thing. *We have to say what is, again, over and over, and always in a different way, but it always has to be the same thing!*"[78] As a result, in this interval the philosopher is able to think being, and not merely think about beings, or, rather, the philosopher is able to think beings because she begins from thinking being.

All of the above is encompassed by the assertion that originary metaphysics is the kind of thinking that thinks being now.

To return for a moment to the aspects. The sophist is the one who wants to undermine being by creating the semblance of non-being, or, to use the current framework, by emphasizing that there is no time. The sophist does not have access to the interval of time.

The scientist also does not have such access, although for a different reason—she simply does not ask about being. Instead she tries to order beings but not from within the interval or according to being, and so, she ends up from the outset relying on the hierarchies that are always more or less random. When Heidegger distinguishes his ontology from the academic kind in *The Introduction to Metaphysics*[79] he is thinking in terms of the distinction between the philosopher and the scientist, who is preoccupied with historiographic metaphysics.

As we have seen, there is no hierarchy between time and eternity because time and eternity are one. However, there is a difference between them, and the mortal does not have access to eternity unless he first becomes the philosopher. From the mortal perspective there seems to be a hierarchy between time and eternity due to the fact that the mortal is unable to hold in mind the one of these two.

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[77] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, p. 39. Later in the text Heidegger explains that "retrieval" means "to let the *same*, the uniqueness of be-ing, become a distress *again*—and that means *thus from a more originary truth*. 'Again' here says precisely 'totally other'" (p. 51).

[78] Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 90.

[79] Cf. Heidegger, *The Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 43.

I would like to emphasize once again that any given human being is a configuration of these and many other aspects—he or she is the mortal, and the philosopher, and the sophist, and the scientist.[80]

Conclusion

When we think of philosophy in an non-philosophical way we often imagine a timeline along which different thinkers and their theories are positioned all the way up to the present instant that we ourselves occupy. Perhaps we even extend this line into the future, unless, of course, following the sentiment of our times we decide that philosophy has become impossible. I have been arguing that because such thinking misunderstands time it results in the historiographic metaphysics.

As we have seen, Heidegger often takes metaphysics to be just this; only for him the structuring principle of its sequence is the increasing forgetting of being. Of course, it is possible to articulate the history of Western thought by using such a paradigm, but it is necessary to be mindful of the fact that this is merely one of the ways of understanding this history, and actually not that seemly, to use Paremnides' term, of a way.

Even so, because Heidegger himself thinks within the interval of time, he not only does originary metaphysics, but is often quite aware of and explicit about it too:

> But Being, since the beginning of Western thought, has been interpreted as the ground in which every being as such is grounded.
> Where does the spring go that springs away from the ground? Into an abyss? Yes, as long as we only represent the spring in the horizon of metaphysical thinking. No, insofar as we spring and let go. Where to? To where we already have access: the belonging to Being.[81]

Using the language of the leap and the abyss Heidegger is ultimately saying that only if we conceive metaphysics in a historiographic fashion do we have to move beyond it or proclaim its end. If, however, we realize that we already have access to being in the

[80] Another aspect worth mentioning is the artist. He is fairly close to the philosopher, although the artist does not try to put being into words, for he primarily deals with images, even if these images consist of words. Perhaps we can say that the artist does not think but rather feels being, and tries to make the mortals feel being as well. In other words, the philosopher in order to convey anything about being needs to make her listeners or readers into philosophers. The artist does not need to make the others into artists. The artist communicates with the mortals, whereas the philosopher only communicates with the other philosophers. We can say that the philosopher never leaves the interval of time but only moves upwards (or downwards) towards being, whereas the artist translates the interval into the terms of the (nonexistent) timeline.

[81] Heidegger, "The Principle of Identity," p. 32-33.

interval of time, we will also have to admit that originary metaphysics is, as always, possible now.

To be sure, our articulations change with the change of beings: the concerns of the twenty first century are very different from those of Ancient Greece. However, because the interval of time is free from causal determinations we can still understand the thought of, say, Heraclitus. Moreover, because this interval is one with eternity, or as Manchester following Plotinus puts it, eternity is paradigmatically time-like, we can not only understand Heraclitus, but also think together with him, or join his thought, and then eventually re-articulate it to better fit our own circumstances. For the interval of time is both that which allows the event to appear, and simultaneously—after all, there are no sequences here—is one with this event. It is in the interval of time that the philosopher intuits being, and this act of intuition—this beginning of metaphysics—is the same one for Heraclitus, Heidegger, and me. Yet, the way in which I will end up articulating this intuition will necessarily be different from that of Heidegger or Heraclitus, since a different set of beings will be harmonized by the interval, and, most likely, a different method used as well. To cite just one obvious difference, among the beings harmonized today there is a hardcover copy of Heraclitus' sayings translated and edited by Charles Kahn. Yet, what I can do today is use the signs contained in this publication in order to enter the same interval of time. So, in this sense philosophical thought is always an act of collaboration between different thinkers, it is always a dialogue or a conversation, even though too often it appears to be a solitary endeavor. Such collaboration, as I have been arguing, only happens in the now when Heraclitus is thinking simultaneously with me.

So, what is originary metaphysics? It is an act of thinking being now. Not thinking about or from beings, and not thinking *about* being, since there is no distance between the two, although there is a difference between them: "[t]he same is to think as well as to be." Because there is no past for this kind of thinking it cannot be over or completed.

The arguments developed in the three chapters of my work—the chapters that engage, respectively, with Parmenides, Plato, and Descartes—ultimately find in the above idea their Archimedean point.

By exploring the *Poem* of Parmenides I elaborate the way in which philosophy has its source in an intuition where *mythos* and *logos* are not yet opposed. I argue that it is only with the consequent articulations that philosophy takes on the shape of rational thinking. In addition, I maintain that the first axiom of philosophy asserts the oneness of everything, although the one is non-hierarchical and does not diminish or repress the differences within it.

In my second chapter I engage with Plato through his dialogue the *Sophist* in order to discuss who the philosopher is. It is with Plato's help that I approach the distinction between the philosopher and his or her double, the sophist—the distinction that I already began developing here.

The third chapter confronts some historiographic interpretations of Descartes's thought and is an attempt to enter the interval of time through a system of signs developed by this particular thinker. Thus, this chapter applies some of the principles elucidated in the previous sections of this work. It also approaches the problem of the

relationship between the new thought and the tradition, or the question of the role that the circumstances of thinking play in relation to the unchanging interval of time.

My closing chapter, just like this introduction, considers the thought of a philosopher who (historiographically) is much closer to our own times, Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze writes with full awareness of Heidegger's elaboration of the end of philosophy, and, in fact, often claims to have as his goal the overcoming of philosophy as metaphysics, as well as sees himself as having moved beyond Heidegger. What I point out, though, is that Deleuze, not unlike Heidegger, is a metaphysician in the originary sense. This too, then, confirms the fact that philosophy as metaphysics has not reached its end.

Chapter 1

Parmenides' *Poem* and the Beginning of Philosophy

Why begin a book that asks the question of the possibility of metaphysics today with an Ancient Greek, with Parmenides?

Ultimately, this study is motivated by a determination very similar to the one expressed in an introduction to a recent study on Heraclitus:

> Because of a widespread criticism of the Enlightenment sense of reason for its unilateral privileging of unity and its solipsistic conception of the thinking subject, many turn to postmodern difference as a remedy. But an alternative can also be found in a renewed appropriation of the tradition.[82]

Except that the claim I would like to make here is even stronger: postmodernism places excessive emphasis on difference, shifting the ontological scales toward yet another extreme. This move is a reaction to a misunderstanding, i.e. to the privileging of a misconstrued notion of oneness. Consequently, the postmodern project becomes superfluous once this notion is re-examined and reconceived, that is, once it is shown that its critique is misplaced. One of the most fruitful ways to conduct such a re-evaluation is by engaging with the work of the Ancient Greeks, in other words, by returning to the moment of Western philosophy's inception in search for the *new* understanding that has been there all along.

Looking at Parmenides from the vantage point of the history of philosophy—by using the approach that in the Introduction I called historiographic—we acknowledge that he represents the temporal point of philosophy's emergence. Along with Heraclitus he stands at the historical origin of *logos*.[83] But he becomes far more influential than Heraclitus due to the impact his thinking exerts on Plato—Parmenides comes to occupy an especially prominent place in Western tradition because he previews the philosophical problems to which Plato is responding, and so, through Plato shapes the development of Western thinking in general. Moreover, Parmenides' writings become more consequential than those of Heraclitus due to Aristotle's authoritative judgment, the judgment that Western scholarly tradition for the most part embraced without the slightest reservation. Aristotle's verdict, after all, is that the Heraclitean position is

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[82] D.C. Schindler. "The Community of the One and the Many: Heraclitus on Reason." *Inquiry* 46 (2003): 413-448.

[83] Because of the frequency with which both "*logos*" and "*mythos*" will be used in this chapter I will transliterate these two Greek words. In all of the other instances I will use a Greek font.

rationally untenable, whereas Parmenides is singled out as the only one of the pre-Socratics who came close to "getting it right." In particular, Parmenides is praised by Aristotle for introducing the principle of non-contradiction.[84] So, in an important sense, Western philosophical tradition unfolds or proceeds from Parmenidean thought.

Another historiographic reason for beginning with Parmenides is the fact that Parmenides' *Poem* is the most extensive text of the pre-Socratics that reached our own time: several fragments of considerable length survive along with many shorter ones. Thus, we have in front of us a text that enables us to experience what philosophy is for the Greeks before Plato, or how Western thought begins. Thus, we do not have to rely only on an occasional quotation or commentaries of Plato, Aristotle, or later scholars.

However, apart from these considerations, Parmenides and his *Poem* is the beginning of philosophy in another, much more profound sense. As I will begin establishing in this chapter, the *Poem* of Parmenides enables us to understand the beginning of any philosophical act, of any act of thinking. Thus, by reading this *Poem* today we can discern what philosophy is at any point in time, and not just at a certain historical junction, albeit an extremely important one for our civilization. That is, if we understand the *Poem* of Parmenides we will also understand a certain feature of any philosophical act—we will understand that philosophical thought presupposes the oneness of everything and is an articulation of this oneness. Thus, once actualized or engaged with, the *Poem* of Parmenides enables us to comprehend the philosophical act called originary metaphysics. The *Poem* suits my purpose especially well, since it deals with this issue most effectively by using both discursive and enigmatic language, i.e. both *logos* and *mythos*.

So, in this chapter I will begin establishing that at its inception, or in the immediacy of the Now, philosophy is always intuition. In other words, thinking begins with intuition, and at that moment is not yet a rational thought, although neither it is irrational. We might also conceptualize this point in the following way: there is no dissonance between *logos* and *mythos* at the point when philosophy begins as thinking being. Thus, being an act of intuition, philosophy cannot but proceed under the assumption that only the *is* is, or that all is one.[85] That is, philosophy takes as its axiom the oneness of everything that is, and no philosophy is possible without this presupposition. In addition, philosophy can develop this intuition into thinking only when supposing that being and thinking, although not identical, are intimately connected with each other. It is through this nonidentical oneness that the realization of the complexity of being follows. In other words, the oneness intuited at the beginning of

[84] In what follows I will evaluate the accuracy of some of such claims by Aristotle.

[85] Both Heraclitus and Parmenides agree on this point. However, Parmenides never uses exactly this formulation, although he comes close to it in B8, 5-6 ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν, ἕν, συνεχές and B8, 38 τῶι πάντ' ὀνόμασται (the numbering of Parmenides' fragments throughout this work is that of Diels/Kranz edition). In Heraclitus' Fragment 50 the above formulation appears as a part of a longer saying: οὐκ ἐμοῦ ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν ἐστιν ἕν πάντα εἶναι, "Not from me, but from the logos hearing, it is wise to say-the-same that all is one." Being an indirect statement, ἕν πάντα εἶναι (all to be one) is translatable into English by means of introducing the pronoun "that" and giving the infinitive present meaning: "…it is wise to acknowledge that all is one." It is this translation that I will appropriate from Heraclitus as the first axiom of philosophy.

philosophy turns out to be complex: the oneness with difference. This last statement might seem rather enigmatic at the moment, but I hope that by the end of this chapter I would have begun to clarify it as well as the other claims just made.[86]

I would like to preview the way in which I will develop the notion of the one in this work. Right away I want to point out that I will use the terms "the one" and "oneness" interchangeably. It might seem that oneness is a predicate just like squareness or largeness. However, it is important to note that oneness is different from a standard predicate: since one is being and the name of being,[87] then oneness is what the one does, i.e. is. Oneness is being, since when it comes to being, the act is not other than what is acting. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that the one has no opposites, so, for instance, the difference or the many are not its contrary. Occasionally, I will refer to the one or oneness as "unity" simply because in the scholarly literature on the topic—as, for instance, in the first quotation of this chapter—this term either refers to, or, more frequently, approximates what I mean by oneness. However, I prefer not to use this term, since it often has a connotation of unifying parts or being their sum. As we will see, the one is not the sum, or the process of counting, as, for instance, a contemporary French thinker Alain Badiou maintains. But even though the one does not consist of parts, it is complex—the one is always the one with difference. All of these claims will be explored in the due course.

In this chapter my goal is to begin elucidating the kind of oneness that constitutes the core of originary metaphysics. As I will show, contrary to the allegations of the twentieth century philosophical trends, oneness is not repressive or destructive of the differences. With respect to this task, Aristotle articulates exactly *the* question that needs to be answered: rather than trying to decide in favor of the one or the many we should determine what kind of oneness we are talking about.

> For it seems to these men[88] that all beings [τὰ ὄντα] would be one, mere being-itself, unless they directly attacked and refuted the saying of Parmenides: 'For never will this be proved that things that are not, are.' And so it seemed to them necessary to prove that there is nonbeing; for if there are many things, they can be only because they are composed of being and of something else. *But, we ask, in the first place without assuming the being of nonbeing, what kind of one are all beings* [ποῖον τὰ ὄντα πάντα ἕν]?[89]

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[86] I would like to stress that although in this chapter I intend to begin clarifying the last several claims about the being of philosophy, their elucidation is the task of this entire book.

[87] Why being is not other than its name, although not only its name will be explained in what follows.

[88] Those who "being understandably dissatisfied with the assumption that 'inequality' can serve with 'unity' as an element, because this assertion has impossible consequences, assume that there is with 'unity' an 'indefinite dyad'" (1088b25). Aristotle almost certainly has in mind the Pythagorean academic discussions of his time, where it was attempted to establish being and non-being as the opposites. All the quotations from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* are from Richard Hope's translation ([Ann Arbor]: University of Michigan Press, 1960).

[89] 1089a3, emphasis added, translation adjusted by me. Aristotle proceeds to conclude that it is "absurd, or rather impossible, that the emergence of some single nature could explain how a thing is not only 'this', but also 'such', 'so much'," etc. So, it is "the kind of being that concerns us in the question how 'being' is

Notice too, that Aristotle is clear that we need to ask about the one before we assume some sort of non-being. As I will establish in the chapters on Plato and Deleuze, in doing this Aristotle here proceeds in the philosophical—as opposed to sophistical—fashion.

I am convinced that one of the best ways to answer Aristotle's question and to elucidate the meaning of oneness is by engaging with the *Poem* of Parmenides.

Intuition

The writings of Parmenides that reached our time consist of about 160 lines of verse in hexameter. They are for the most part preserved in the works of Sextus Empiricus and Simplicius, and contain the longest extant excerpt from the pre-Socratics—the transcript of 52 consecutive lines of the text that became known as Fragment 8 or B8.[90]

The *Poem* has been traditionally divided into three parts: the proem, the Way of Truth, and the Way of Opinion (or the Way of Doxa). Most scholars of Parmenides—especially those who wrote about him in the last two centuries—following Aristotle, focused on the second part and saw virtually no philosophical value in the other two segments.[91] In addition, Fragment 8, which belongs to the second part of the *Poem*, received the most attention from the scholars because of the arguments it contains. Fragment 3—often translated as "Mind and Being are the same"—is especially notorious, largely due to its controversial interpretation by Martin Heidegger.

In other words, throughout the centuries only certain aspects of the *Poem* were studied, so as a consequence, the meaning of the whole work became obscured. Granted,

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'many' is primary being" (1089a34). Even if leave aside the issue of whether Aristotle's answer to this question is correct or even can be found, we have to admit that he hit the mark, asking exactly *the* question that needs to be addressed.

[90] Lines 1-30 of B1 are recorded by Sextus Empiricus, and Fragment B8 as well as other fragments are incorporated into Simplicius' commentaries on *De caelo* and the *Physics* of Aristotle. Cf. G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, M. Schofield. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 241.

[91] This attitude is evident in W. K. C. Guthrie's *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Volume 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). Even though he is rather sympathetic to exploring the implications of the proem and the Way of Opinion, he writes: "After a prologue of thirty-two lines, the poem is in two parts, dealing respectively with truth and seeming. Diels estimates that about nine-tenths of the first part has survived, whereas of the second part there are only small scraps amounting to perhaps one-tenth. Fortunately the first part is by far the most important…" (p. 3-4). In other words, for Guthrie the proem has a qualitatively different status than the other two parts, since it does not even merit to be counted as a part. Even the fact that so little survives of the third part exhibits such scholarly prejudices, and yet, this too, as we will see confirms the words of the goddess and the overall purpose of the *Poem*: the opinions of mortals are subject to constant change, loss, and decay.

the 160 lines that reached our era are themselves only fragments—even if extensive—of the *Poem*, but here I mean something other than not taking into account this or that part of one work, but rather choosing to notice only certain features of the text—for instance, only the logical arguments of B8, or, even more narrowly, only the principle of non-contradiction—and discarding the others as inconsequential. Thus, the proem has often been disqualified as insubstantial mythology or unnecessary literary flourish, the Way of Doxa has been regarded as hopelessly outdated science, and only certain features of the Way or Truth esteemed worthy of scrutiny.

Contrary to such an approach, I am convinced that only by reading the *Poem* as a whole do we have a chance of understanding what Parmenides has to say. Moreover, as I will show, by marginalizing or even excluding the first and the last divisions of the *Poem* we also subject ourselves to ignorance about what philosophy is. In particular, by focusing almost exclusively on the second part of the *Poem* and its significance for Western rationality—after all Parmenides is considered to be the father of logic and the first representative of rational thought—we foreclose the possibility of understanding that philosophy begins with an act of intuition, as well as preclude ourselves from understanding how being is one. So, the need to conceive the way in which the *Poem* is one is emblematic of the need to understand how everything that *is* is one. And even though for the sake of convenience I will be referring to the different parts of the *Poem*, philosophically speaking, such an approach is consistent or accurate only because the appearances are one with being.

So, let us begin against the common trend at the very beginning.

1The mares that carry me as far as longing can reach
rode on, once they had come and fetched me onto the legendary
road of the divinity that carries the man who knows
through the vast and dark unknown. And on I was carried
as the mares, aware just where to go, kept carrying me
5 straining at the chariot; and the young women led the way.
And the axle in the hubs let out the sound of a pipe
blazing from the pressure of the two well-rounded wheels
at either side, as they rapidly led on: young women, girls,
daughters of the Sun who had left the mansions of Night
10 for the light and pushed back the veils from their faces
with their hands.
These are the gates of the pathways of Night and Day,
held fast in place between the lintel above and a threshold of stone;
and they reach up into the heavens, filled with gigantic doors.
And the keys—that now open, now lock—are held fast by
Justice: she who always demands exact returns. And with
15 soft seductive words the girls cunningly persuaded her to
push back immediately, just for them, the bar that bolts
the gates. And as the doors flew open, making the bronze
axels with their pegs and nails spin—now one, now the other—
in their pipes, they created a gaping chasm. Straight through and
20 on the girls held fast their course for the chariot and horses,

straight down the road.
And the goddess welcomed me kindly, and took
My right hand in hers and spoke these words as she addressed me:
'Welcome young man, partnered by immortal charioteers,
25 reaching our home with the mares that carry you. For it was
no hard fate that sent you traveling this road—so far away
from the beaten track of humans—but Rightness, and Justice.
And what's needed is for you to learn all things: both the unshaken
heart of persuasive[92] Truth and the opinions of mortals,
30 in which there's nothing that can truthfully be trusted at all.
But even so, this too you will learn—how beliefs based on
appearance ought to be believable as they travel all through
all there is.[93]

As I already mentioned, numerous scholars refuse to take seriously this first fragment—the proem. F. M. Cornford, for instance, sends a more or less superficial glance its way: "We need not linger over the allegorical proem." The goddess's dwelling "on the further side of these gates [of Day and Night] must be symbolic," he claims.[94] The authoritative anthology *The Presocratic Philosophers* keeps referring to the proem as an allegory,[95] and, undoubtedly, it can be understood as such, but we must not therefore treat this fragment as literature. But how else might one treat the account of such a journey to the realm of the unnamed goddess so vividly described by Parmenides?

W. K. C. Guthrie, though hesitant to wholeheartedly embrace the idea, points out the shamanistic features of Parmenides' thought: "Applied to a logician the term [prophet] may sound contradictory, yet it is true that Parmenides was at one with Heraclitus in claiming a prophetic or apocalyptic authority for his teaching."[96] In the paragraphs that follow Guthrie clarifies that by prophetic or apocalyptic authority he is referring to the shamanic qualities of Parmenides' work. For instance, following J. S. Morrison, Guthrie points out that the present tense of the Greek φέρουσι from the first line of the *Poem* "suggests habit: Parmenides is a shaman-like figure for whom such spiritual journeys are a regular experience."[97] Guthrie further points out that: "One cannot doubt that the prologue describes a genuine experience. As a mere literary device nothing could be more unsuited to the main content of the poem…. Clearly…Parmenides

[92] Translating εὐπειθέος. Manchester prefers to read εὐκυκλέος, well-rounded.

[93] Translation from Peter Kingsley. *Reality*. Inverness: The Golden Sufi Center, 2003, p. 26-27.

[94] Francis MacDonald Cornford. *Plato and Parmenides*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980, p. 30.

[95] Cf. G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. London: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 1963, p. 265, 266.

[96] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 2, p. 6.

[97] *Ibid*., Vol. 1, p.7.

was not a *rationalist* of the Ionian type…"[98] and continues to say that it is "extraordinarily difficult" to "know how much weight should be given to the non-rational element in his writings."[99] So, according to Guthrie, the proem describes a journey that *resembles* "those of the shamans of Siberia."[100] He is reluctant to embrace the idea that Parmenides is a shaman lest the *Poem* be dismissed on the grounds that its author is "a psychically unstable person who has received a call to religious life"—the definition that E. R. Dodds provides in his influential study *The Greeks and the Irrational*.[101] Guthrie cautions us against "too free a use of the term [shaman] with reference to Greek practice or belief" drawing in particular on Mircea Eliade's seminal work on this topic.[102] According to Eliade, shamanism "in the strict sense is pre-eminently a religious phenomenon of Siberia and Central Asia" because "through this whole region in which the ecstatic experience is considered the religious experience par excellence, the shaman, and he alone, is the greatest master of ecstasy."[103] Eliade claims that shamanism is first and foremost the technique of ecstasy, and specifies that by ecstatic experience he means a trance during which one's "soul is believed to leave his body and ascend to the sky or descend to the underworld."[104] It is important to note that a shaman is not a possessed person, but the one who knows how to control the spirits, i.e. communicates with them without becoming their instrument.

From this definition follows that the presence of shamanic practices in a given culture does not entail that in it there are shamans. So, when Eliade considers the Indo-European context he admits that within it there undoubtedly are present vestiges or elements of shamanism, but this does not mean that the Ancient Greek culture has "shamanistic structure."[105] In fact, already Dodds established that Ancient Greece was profoundly influenced by the shamanistic cultures, the remnants of which still exist in Siberia. In particular, he argued that the opposition between the soul and the body—the opposition that in his view fuelled the development of Western philosophy—was a consequence of precisely such influence, and eventually resulted in what Dodds calls Greek Puritanism. In Scythia, Dodds maintains, "the Greeks come in contact with peoples who… where influenced by this shamanic culture…. The fruits of this contact are to be seen in the appearance, late in the Archaic Age, of a series of ἰατρομάντεις, seers,

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[98] It is arguable, of course, to what extent the Ionians themselves were rationalists, but this issue falls outside the scope of the current project.

[99] *Ibid*., p. 12.

[100] *Ibid*., p. 11.

[101] Quoted in Guthrie's *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 2, p.13. E. R. Dodds. *The Greeks and the Irrational*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p. 140.

[102] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 2, p. 11. Mircea Eliade. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 375ff.

[103] Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 4.

[104] *Ibid*., p. 5.

[105] *Ibid*., p. 376.

magical healers, and religious teachers…."[106] However, the incorporation of shamanistic practices occurred "at the cost of a specialization and, finally, a limitation in shamanic powers" claims Eliade.[107] As, Dodds himself points out, the Greek culture at large ultimately misunderstands shamanism.[108]

Speaking of what the shamanic persona is before it becomes fractured by specialization, Dodds notes that "Empedocles represents not a new but a very old type of personality, the shaman who combines the still undifferentiated functions of magician and naturalist, poet and philosopher, preacher, healer, and public counselor. After him these functions fell apart; philosophers henceforth were to be neither poets nor magicians…"[109] The above is also true of Parmenides: he too unifies in himself the aspects mentioned by Dodds, although, historically speaking, soon after Parmenides the philosopher no longer assumes the other functions of the shaman. Yet, the philosopher in the strict philosophical sense—the sense which I will explore in the following chapters—is the one who approximates the shaman.

But even apart from this consideration, if we look for explicit shamanic elements in later Greek thought, we will have to conclude together with Eliade that even though the "enormous gap … separates a shaman's ecstasy from Plato's contemplation"[110] there are elements of shamanism even in Plato. Take, for instance, one of the most vivid examples—the myth of Er that concludes the *Republic*: in it through an ecstatic experience a mortal gains the awareness that surpasses the mortal limitations.

But returning to Parmenides, in the first fragment we are told that he is carried to the gates of Night and Day, which Justice opens for him. This fact alone situates him within the tradition of the shamanic figures such as Epimenides who in a dreamlike or ecstatic state encountered the goddess Truth and Justice.[111] In addition, both David Gallop and Kingsley argue that the gates are the ones that open into the *underworld*.[112] As you recall, Eliade defines the shaman as an expert at traveling to the underworld. The technique used to enable this journey is called incubation and involves

> isolating yourself in a dark place, lying down in complete stillness, staying motionless for hours or days…. this stillness is what gave access to another world, a world of utter paradox; to a totally different state of awareness. Sometimes this state was described as a kind of dream. Sometimes it was referred to as like a

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[106] Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, p. 140.

[107] Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 378.

[108] Cf. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, pp. 149-150, p. 151.

[109] *Ibid*., p. 146.

[110] Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 394.

[111] Cf. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 2, p. 11.

[112] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 30; David Gallop also asserts this in the book Parmenides of Elea. *Fragments*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, pp. 6-7.

> dream but not a dream, as really a third type of consciousness quite different from either walking or sleeping.[113]

In fact, the phrase "the man who knows" in the third line of the proem was a standard way of referring to somebody who is being initiated into such a practice.[114]

So, it is quite clear that the *Poem* describes shamanic experience, but does this entail that Parmenides is a shaman, as Kingsley makes him out to be, or would it be more accurate to side with Eliade and Guthrie who are hesitant to identify him as such? The issue, as often in such cases, is tied with deciding on a definition of the shaman. Eliade, quite understandably, wishes to restrict this term only to the instances in which the whole culture is shamanic, which indeed hinders Parmenides from being identified as a shaman. However, for the purposes of the current project, it is quite sufficient that Parmenides and his thought have shamanic qualities, since this entails that Parmenides is much more than a rational thinker, and that his work draws on and acknowledges the interconnections of *mythos* and *logos*, and not their opposition. Which entails that philosophy begins or develops from the oneness rather than separation or distinction. For Parmenides as well as his contemporaries there is no difficulty of reconciling Parmenides-the-rational-thinker and Parmenides-the-shaman.

For instance, already in the first line of the *Poem* we encounter a Greek word θυμός—the word that has been often translated as thought. However, θυμός, is by no means a rational act, but rather "the energy of life itself. It's the raw presence in us that senses and feels; the massed power of our emotional being. Above all it's the energy of passion, appetite, yearning, longing."[115] So, Parmenides claims that it is θυμός that propels him this far on his journey, i.e. his thought has its source in passion, and not intellectual curiosity, for instance. So, from the very outset we must recognize that the *Poem* is not a mere record of rational activity, but rather something that requires a much more complete engagement on Parmenides' part.

Let's consider another feature of the *Poem*. Parmenides is notorious for his use of repetition, and one of the most striking instances of it is the appearance of the word "carry" four times in quick succession right at the beginning of the *Poem*. Usually scholars deem this repetition "awkward" and "pointless," attributing it to carelessness on Parmenides' part, and interpreting it as a sign of his failure as a poet.[116] This is far from being the case. Gadamer, for instance, notes that repetition suggests a "more pondering

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[113] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 31.

[114] Cf. Kingsley, *In the Dark Places of Wisdom*, p. 62.

[115] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 27.

[116] Among the most prominent examples, although there are numerous others (see, for instance, H. Diels and A. P. D. Mourelatos), stands out a passage by Kirk, Raven and M. Schofield: "Ancients and moderns alike are agreed upon a low estimation of Parmenides' gift as a writer. He has little facility in diction, and the struggle to force novel, difficult and highly abstract philosophical ideas into metrical form frequently results in ineradicable obscurity, especially syntactic obscurity. On the other hand, in the less argumentative passages of the poem he achieves a kind of clumsy grandeur" (*The Presocratic Philosophers*, p. 241).

and reflective contemplation."[117] But even more importantly, in the initiatory writings repetition was used to provoke or trigger the state of consciousness in-between sleeping and waking, i.e. an ecstatic experience. In particular, "…shamans are famous for repeating the words for journeying and being 'carried'. And they do this not just to describe the ecstatic journeys they make into another world but as a way of invoking them: of bringing them about."[118] Thus the much deplored repetition is, in fact, a record of ecstatic experience and is supposed to seduce us into the one of the same kind. Because Parmenides' thought is a result of ecstatic experience, it is therefore an instance of his own effort and simultaneously that which happens to him, i.e. being.[119] We can say that the *Poem* is an instance of ξυνός or common thinking in the sense elaborated by Schindler in his study of Heraclitus' writings: "thought is something one *simultaneously* generates and finds."[120] Such common thinking, being a shared activity, is both *a priori* and *a posteriori*, as Schindler concludes, i.e. both something that is more than a particular situation, and is informed by that situation.[121]

Another kind of repetition found in the proem is that of the different motions that accompany and enable Parmenides' journey, among which the circular ones are especially noteworthy: the moving wheels of his chariot, the movement of the keys that open and lock the gates of Night and Day, and the spinning of the pegs and nails of the bronze axels of the doors. These circles echo or repeat what the goddess will declare in Fragment 5: "It is all the same [ξυνόν] to me where I am to begin; for I shall return there again." As for the sounds, Parmenides focuses on a very peculiar sound of piping that comes from the two "well-rounded" wheels of his chariot, and a little later he uses the word "pipe" to describe the sound made by the spinning of the doors. According to *The Greek Magical Papyri* this sound accompanies a shaman on his—or, in rare cases, her—ecstatic journey.[122] "The standard Greek texts that discuss the practice of incubation consistently describe what happens when you start to enter another state of consciousness. Everything begins spinning, moving in a circle; and you hear a piping,

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[117] Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer. *The Beginning of Philosophy*. New York: Continuum, 2000, p. 97.

[118] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 35.

[119] To draw a parallel to a thinker that only marginally appears in this work, in section 5 of *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche attempts to explain the same phenomenon by discussing the mood or *Stimmung*. As David Allison explains: "Once mood is understood *relationally* as the emotional or affective "attunement" or "disposition" one has with the entirety of one's surrounding environment, rather than as an internal, self-enclosed mental image of the individuated subject, it follows that the mood state is all-pervasive for one's experience…. The emotionally charged mood state is neither within nor without, neither subjective, nor objective in the strict sense." *Reading the New Nietzsche*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001, p. 46-47. It is important to note that even though shamanic practices in Ancient Greece were connected with Apollo rather than Dionysus (cf. *Shamanism*, p. 388), we should not conceive this Apollo as being equivalent to the one Nietzsche elaborates in *The Birth of Tragedy* and sets in clear opposition to Dionysus. Rather, the Apollo of the shamans is the unity of Nietzschean Apollo and Dionysus.

[120] Schindler, "The Community of the One and the Many: Heraclitus on Reason," p. 425.

[121] Heraclitus, Fragment 2: "Although *logos* is shared, the many live as though thinking were private."

[122] Kingsley, *In the Dark Places of Wisdom*, 129-130.

hissing sound just like the hissing of a snake."[123] Eliade too notes that a *whistling* sound (in this case of the wind) accompanies the shaman's descent to the underworld.[124]

It is also significant that Parmenides is greeted as κοῦρος, a word that means a boy or a young man, but in a shamanic context does not refer to one's physical age, but rather to the fact that one is being initiated into an ecstatic experience. [125] Moreover, the goddess who greets Parmenides and who then proceeds to discuss with him both the matters of truth and the mortal opinions, although never mentioned by name, is Persephone, the queen of the underworld, and the deity explicitly connected with the initiatory experiences.[126]

All of the features of the proem discussed above point to the fact that the *Poem* is a result and an instance of ecstatic experience. So that even if Greek culture at the time is not such that Parmenides can be unambiguously identified as a shaman, we are still bound to conclude, just like Eliade does, that Parmenides exhibits "unmistakably shamanic characteristics" on par with such personages as Orpheus, Aristeas and Pythagoras.[127] In other words, the proem establishes that Parmenides' work is a result of ecstatic experience, and not a product of rational or intellectual activity, although, as we will see, such rational activity is not excluded from this experience. Thus, we should take seriously the mythical aspect of his work, and thus acknowledge that in Parmenides the opposition between *mythos* and *logos* is anachronistic, although there definitely is a difference between the two. Let us take a closer look at debate around this issue.

The dominant—especially in the last two centuries—tendency in Western scholarship conceives the pre-Socratic thinkers as making a clean break from the mythological thought of Hesiod and Homer.[128] In establishing such a radical separation between *mythos* and *logos* the aim is to make or construe the origins of Western philosophical tradition as unambiguously rooted in rationality. However, even though the differentiation between *mythos* and *logos* undeniably occurs in the later Greek thought, fuelling the historical development or progress of Western civilization—the way in which it happens is much more complex than the scholars customarily assume, and, at least with Parmenides, the distance between the two takes on an entirely different function than is often supposed. In what follows I do not intend to present an exhaustive account of the relationship between *mythos* and *logos* or of the emergence of *logos* as reason in Ancient Greek thought. However, using Parmenides' thought, I will claim contra the dominant tradition of scholarship that Ancient Greek thought before Aristotle

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[123] *Ibid*., 36.

[124] Cf. Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 201.

[125] Kingsley, *Reality*, 32.

[126] Cf. Charles Stein. *Persephone Unveiled*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2006 and Peter Kingsley's *Reality* and *In the Dark Places of Wisdom*.

[127] Mircea Eliade. "Zalmoxis." *History of Religions*. Vol. 11, No. 3 (February, 1972), pp. 257-302, p. 274.

[128] The tendency to interpret Greek thought in this way is, of course, culturally determined insofar as it is motivated by the Enlightenment's need to distance itself from or overthrow the overly theistic Scholasticism.

preserves the oneness of *mythos* and *logos* because of this thought's emphasis on the ontologically first, intuitive moment of philosophy. Such thinking is both mythical and logical because the act of grasping the one—the act that begins philosophy—cannot be reduced to rationality or logic. In this respect Derrida is absolutely correct in asserting that: "Metaphysics—the white mythology which reassembles and reflects the culture of the West: the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, his own *logos*, that is, the *mythos* of his idiom, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason."[129] Indeed, Western reason has its source in the one of *mythos* and *logos*, although we are not thus justified to conclude that Western metaphysics exhausted itself, or brought about its own destitution.

I will set up my discussion of *mythos* and *logos* by distinguishing the two ways of understanding the beginning of Western philosophy and science. The view that for the last two centuries dominated the scholarly tradition and that is perhaps best represented by John Burnet's position, maintains that the precise date for the decline of mythical thought and consequent inauguration of rationality can be and has been established.[130] It is at the beginning of the sixth century before the common era in Ionian Miletus that Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes introduced a completely new way of thinking—natural philosophy.[131] For instance, Burnet writes that "It would be completely false to seek the origins of Ionian science in some mythic conception," and argues for an absolutely clean and complete break between philosophical ideas and mythology.[132] But, as Jean-Pierre Vernant points out, this "intellectual revolution appears to have been so sudden and so radical that it has been considered inexplicable in terms of historical causality: we speak of a Greek miracle. All of a sudden, on the soil of Ionia, *logos* presumably broke free of myth, as the scales fell from the blind man's eyes. And the light of that reason, revealed once and for all, has never ceased to guide the progress of the human mind."[133] That is, ironically, the scholars who were trying so hard to establish the *rational* origins for Western thought in doing so ended up resorting to a miraculous explanation.

Even if such a view is somewhat toned down it still remains problematic. For instance, Guthrie asserts that although it would be too hasty to maintain that the Milesians created science, it is nevertheless correct to think that they "lifted it on to an entirely different plane."[134] Even some of the most generous readers of the pre-Socratics, such as Gadamer, oppose myth and philosophy claiming that "the great epic tradition

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[129] Jacques Derrida. "White Mythology." *Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 213.

[130] Cf. Jean-Pierre Vernant. *The Origins of Greek Thought*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982, p. 102. See also Vernant's *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, especially Part Seven "From Myth to Reason," pp. 371-409.

[131] *Ibid*., p. 102.

[132] John Burnet. *Early Greek Philosophy*. Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1961, p. 13 and ff.

[133] Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought*, p. 103-104.

[134] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol., 1, p. 34.

dating from Homer and Hesiod, *despite* its mythical and narrative form, also, of course, has philosophical value. It is no accident that Eleatic philosophy … makes use of the Homeric hexameter to formulate its arguments."[135] While allowing myth to be philosophical, while tolerating the communication or the exchange of form between the two, we are still unwilling to admit the mythological aspect or beginning of the rational.

In his work Cornford presents a challenge to such interpretations of Greek thought. [136] I will briefly outline his position in order to establish the second definitive understanding of the beginnings of Western rationality. The early philosophers, Cornford argues, are in fact very close to myth. For one, they are answering the same question as their predecessors: "How has the order been established?" In addition, they use the same conceptual apparatus and explanatory schema, and even the details of their accounts are often identical: "Sexual generation, the cosmic egg, the tree of life. The separation of a previously mingled earth and sky—all were implicit images that are visible like a watermark behind the "physical" explanations…."[137]

Which means that, after all, the Milesians are far from being on an "entirely different plane" than Homer and Hesiod. For instance, in Fragment 40 Heraclitus attacks Homer and Hesiod "evenhandedly along with Xenophanes and Hecataeus, who from our perspective tended toward rationalism."[138] Given the above we are unable to conclude that Anaximander is radically different from Hesiod.

There is yet another reason for seeing continuity rather than a decisive break between Homer and the pre-Socratics: only very late in antiquity does the term *logos* take on the meaning of reason. Even though, as Roman Dilcher points out, around the fifth century before our era the ways in which *logos* is used shifts, this shift is a change of emphasis and turns out to be lot more complex than it might appear at a first glance.

Although in Epic poetry *logos* can not be clearly distinguished from the more general μῦθος, it already has its own peculiar uses. For instance, in the plural it describes an act of persuasion and deception, and thus, λόγοι "consist in some sort of coherent exposition…. they must be plausible, have an argument and be based on reflection. They must display a clever arrangement and a deliberate shaping."[139] In other words, such λόγοι have a particular character, and can be distinguished from other λόγοι. When used in the singular *logos* means a story or a proverb, an account or a response of an oracle—

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[135] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, p. 94, emphasis added.

[136] Cf. especially Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Specularization* and *Principium Sapientiae: The Origins of Greek Philosophical Thought*.

[137] Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought*, p. 106.

[138] E. F. Beall. "Concerning Milesian 'Science' in the context of Archaic Literature Generally." 1988. E.F. Beall's Site. Apr. 2008 <http://philosophy.efbeall.net/milesians.htm>, p. 13. Beall asserts that "the traditional assertion that the Milesians rationally debated conceptions of an abstract, objective universe is inadequately based" (p. 20). If we understand better archaic societies then "the Milesians will emerge as having stressed magical means more than practical goals" (p. 21).

[139] Roman Dilcher. *Studies in Heraclitus*. Hildeshein: Georg Olms AG, 1995, p. 32.

that is, logos is not "just 'anything' that happens to be said," but is rather tied to a specific situation.[140]

Some other meanings which *logos* has in Homer's time include a case established in a law suit, a financial account, and an expression of one's worth or esteem. Because in all of these cases *logos* involves some kind of reflection, it "does not mean just the actual exposition of one's account in speech, but also comprises the process of thinking by which it is achieved and which is of course displayed therein." [141] This, of course, indicates that the "rational" aspect of *logos* is discernible or present from the very outset, or in what we consider a purely mythical phase.

As we move closer to Plato and Aristotle, i.e. from the middle of the fifth century onwards, *logos* slowly ceases to be tied to specific words, but rather is conceived as being something more objective or independent from the speaker. In fact, as becomes clear from a close study of Heraclitus' work, *logos* comes to occupy the position in-between the subjective and the objective, or, we can say, *logos* is the intersection of the two. This greater distance between *logos* and a specific context of its utterance leads to it becoming "dynamic and almost personified."[142] This, of course, only accentuates the dependence of *logos* on its oneness with *mythos*—indeed, at the time of Plato and the Sophists this in-between character of *logos* was allegorically represented by making Hermes its personification.[143] This is a perfect illustration of the following principle: the moment in which *logos* begins approximating what we call "rationality" it reveals all the more forcefully its other—*mythos*. The Greeks, at least, are aware of such interdependence, whereas we, as Derrida forcefully points out, tend to repress or deny one of the terms and thus forget their absolute dependence on the other.

The earliest example of *logos* being used to mean "rationality," i.e. being able to stand on its own not connected to any specific context or consideration is found in Democritus. Even so, this particular meaning is only one of the numerous meanings of *logos* in Plato's and Aristotle's work. Moreover, it is not until Stoicism that *logos* becomes localized in an individual human being.[144]

So, as this brief history of the term indicates, there is no unambiguous break between *logos* and *mythos*. Although difference between *mythos* and *logos* is visible already in Epic poetry, the two terms are never conceived in opposition to each other. Moreover, with the rationalization of *logos*, its connection with *mythos* also strengthens. And even when *logos* comes to mean rationality it does not shed its other meanings. In other words, Ancient Greek "rationality" is never fully rational, and in it there is always

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[140] *Ibid*., p. 33.

[141] *Ibid*., p. 35.

[142] *Ibid*., p. 37.

[143] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 36-37. In particular, see Plato's *Cratylus* 407e5 ff.

[144] Cf. *ibid*., p. 39-40.

room for the others to reason, i.e. to what we have excluded and repressed as "mere myth."[145]

This etymological expose further confirms the position elaborated by Cornford: the unambiguous distinction that we want to draw between the Greek philosophers and the earlier cosmologists or theogonists is untenable.

Vernant's response to this debate between Cornford and Burnet tries to find a middle ground. Even thought Vernant recognizes that Cornford's argument about the interrelationship between *mythos* and *logos* is valid, yet he feels that there is still the need to establish and trace out the difference between myth and philosophy. Ultimately, Vernant too is motivated by the desire to explain or justify the origin of Western thought—the project that, as we have seen lead to the mythologization of rationality. So, Vernant asserts that despite the "echoes and analogies… there is no real continuity between myth and philosophy," for a "new mental attitude" develops in the fifth century Ancient Greece—the attitude that is characterized by the lack of concern with the ritual, or the religious practices to which myth always remains tied.[146] More precisely, continues Vernant, "myth's function was to establish a distinction and a kind of distance between what is first from a temporal standpoint and what is first from the standpoint of power."[147] The myth, explains Vernant, is shaped within this distance, whereas the pre-Socratic philosophers focus their attention on the ἀρχή by which they refer "indiscriminately to the first in temporal series and to primacy in a social hierarchy" and thus abolish the distance that maintains myth.[148]

So, trying to transcend the limitations of both Burnet's and Cornford's positions, Vernant concludes that the "Milesian school did not witness the birth of Reason; rather, it devised a kind of reasoning, an early form of rationality."[149] It is the change in the political situation in Greece, and in particular the shift in the Greek *polis* from monarchy to democracy instituted by Solon that instigated the emergence of this new form of reasoning. "Reason itself," Vernant writes, "was in essence political."[150] In other words, Vernant explains the differentiation of myth from reason, or the emergence of *logos* as reason as a consequence of the social and political change.

Such explanation, however, is philosophically inadequate, for even though thinking always occurs in a specific situation, it cannot be reduced to it in supposing that the situation itself caused thought. Vernant is correct to expose the need to understand

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[145] Nietzsche is perfectly aware of this, of course, when he is writing *The Birth of Tragedy*, although he is unwilling to see the how Socrates and Plato further confirm this mutual dependence of *mythos* and *logos*. More about this in the following chapter.

[146] Cf. Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought*, p. 107.

[147] *Ibid*., p. 114.

[148] *Ibid*., p. 114. For instance, Vernant explains, Anaximander's ἄπειρον is not only the governing principle, but also ἀρχή, or the source of everything (cf. ibid., p. 115).

[149] *Ibid*., p. 130.

[150] *Ibid*., p. 130.

the difference between *mythos* and *logos*, and yet, to conceive this difference as a consequence of democracy would be, I think, a rather hasty simplification.

To reiterate, Cornford wants to comprehend the unity between myth and logic—the unity that for centuries has been overlooked and undervalued. Vernant recognizes this move as a legitimate one, yet in trying to comprehend the specificity of the West also desires to capture the difference between *mythos* and *logos*. However, he ultimately fails to provide an adequate account of this difference. What he does is situate the difference within the historical sequence of events, which explains why the difference gained momentum, but not the difference as such. In other words, he might be successfully explaining why the emphasis shifted in a particular historical and geographical area, but since philosophy develops out of the interrelationship of both *mythos* and *logos*, and since it always has to harmonize them, there are multiple configurations of the two. So, what Vernant tries to explain is a particular configuration, which, as he himself admits, changes all too rapidly: "quite soon it [philosophy] claimed greater independence. With Parmenides it took its own path."[151] So, already with Parmenides the circumstances change enough, that it becomes impossible to understand philosophy's situation through the emergence of a democratic city-state. The historical or political circumstances can only rearrange the emphases on what is, but never create or bring about the new. That is why, of course, it was more difficult, but not impossible to think in Stalinist Ukraine. This is also why it is much more comfortable to think in Ancient Greece, but this fact alone does not entail that there is going to be thinking.

So, we have to look for the difference elsewhere, seeing it as internal to the act or process of thinking. This is the reason for why I am arguing that in the moment of intuition *mythos* is one with *logos*, and the difference between them comes to the fore only in further articulations, some of which prioritize one of the two aspects, without ever completely excluding the other. The problem with the West—the problem so fiercely attacked in post-modernity—is that it forgot its own indebtedness to this other to *logos*. After all, in the 20th century we raised the question of the end of philosophy as metaphysics, because we reduced metaphysics to rationality and then witnessed rationality's limitations.

Thus, even if Vernant's account is historically accurate, and our discursive thought is indebted to the political situation in Ancient Greece for its emergence, this explanation holds only in a certain, very specific context—it is applicable within historiographic accounts. From the point of view of originary metaphysics, however, we need to acknowledge in a Heraclitean fashion that reason speaks (in) myth, and myth (in) reason.

Consequently, in Parmenides both myth and reason are present, but unlike the case with many later thinkers, Parmenides acknowledges their interdependence. One of the most far-reaching signs of this is the fact that both the Way of Truth, and the Way of Opinion are the words of Persephone. As we have seen, this fact is not merely a literary device, but rather an establishing of the balance between *mythos* and *logos*. Moreover, at the very beginning of both B2 and B8 the goddess announces that what follows is her *mythos*, and in B8, 50 she points out that now her trustworthy or convincing *logos* stops

[151] *Ibid*., p. 131.

and the deceitful cosmos of her words, κόσμον ἐπέων ἀπατηλόν, begins. In this she reinforces the oneness of the two, while at the same pointing out their difference: *logos* ἀμφὶς, around or on both sides of truth is convincing, especially as opposed to the deceitful words of the mortal opinions, where as *mythos* is her whole speech. The opposition between *logos* and the deceitful opinions or opinions not-around-truth emerges in B7 where the goddess urges Parmenides to judge by *logos* as opposed to relying on "sightless eye and echoing ear and tongue." I will discuss this fragment later in relation to numerous confusions that it provoked in relation to Parmenides' supposed refusal of the senses. For the moment I want to emphasize that *logos* is thinking around truth, and as such opposed to unseemly opinions, but not to *mythos*, part of which are opinions in general. *Logos* is, indeed, common or ξυνόν. This term, as I already mentioned, is central to Heraclitus' position, and means common, shared in common, public or ordinary, and thus, eventually comes to mean profane. Usually brothers or sisters are said to have common origin, and *logos* too is common in this sense, since there are many different articulations around truth.[152] So, *logos* is common, or all the different seemly opinions are share with truth common *logos*, but the opinions that are unseemly, that reflect habitual, unexamined or inexperienced assumptions, albeit widespread, are not common.

As we have seen, considered historically, the shift of emphasis from *mythos* to *logos*, and the subsequent emergence of *logos* as reason was an extremely slow and ambiguous process. True, the pre-Socratics, and Parmenides in particular, do create new concepts,[153] deepening and re-creating the ideas of their more mythologically-minded predecessors, but changing the balance of *mythos* and *logos* does entail or signify a decisive break with *mythos*.

As a result of the reflections generated by the proem, we have to admit that philosophy historically began, but also—as we will witness in the course of this book—always begins in the moment when reason and myth, or the logical and the mythical, are one. For philosophy arises out of the moment where rationality and its others are inextricably connected, or where there is no radical difference between the rational and the nonrational, the moment where *mythos* and *logos* though different are not opposed, where *logos* itself is not yet separated or cut off as Reason. This moment is the one of intuition, and it is in this sense that philosophy has its source in intuition.

Throughout the history of the West the balance between *mythos* and *logos* changes, and, for instance, with the Enlightenment *mythos* is for the most part denied, but even then it remains implicated or presupposed in the often ostentatious pageant of the strictly logical derivations. In the moment of intuition *mythos* and *logos* constitute a harmonious one, although as thinking is articulated their delicate balance changes, sometimes to the point where the initial harmony is disrupted.

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[152] Perhaps this can be also related to Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblance, where too the differences—sometimes vast, immense differences—are possible because of common origin.

[153] As Guthrie notes when discussing Parmenides in the second volume of *A History of Greek Philosophy*, "One can feel the struggle to convey philosophical concepts for which the expression does not yet exist, and some lines are scarcely amenable to translation at all," p. 4.

So, what is intuition or intuitive experience? It is the experience in which an event is inseparable from its reception by a human being or from human activity. Where an event is that which happens, and which cannot be reduced to its causes, i.e. cannot be explained from within the timeline, to use the terminology of the Introduction. Thus, an event is always ecstatic. In intuitive experience there is no "gap" or distance between what we ordinarily call "objective" and "subjective," between epistemological and metaphysical considerations and therefore, there can be no mistaking of something for something else, no misinterpretation, since there is no space for interpretation. Intuition of an event is always something immediate, within its moment there is no need for or even possibility of rational arguments. Intuition is the human ability to connect to an event, as well as an act of such unification. We can even call intuition a human "organ" that enables us to think being by engaging with an ecstatic event. It is at this point that the philosopher is also a shaman, since intuition is the first moment for both, and only later each one takes on quite a different function.

The Enigmatic *Poem*

Another way in which Parmenides underscores the centrality of the intuitive moment for the philosophical act is by writing in enigmas. Even though I have been arguing that intuition is a necessary moment in any philosophical act, it can figure more or less prominently in the writings of a particular thinker. For instance, in Parmenides' case it is central to his thought. Just as it is for Descartes, since the entire corpus of his writings revolves around the intuition "I think, I am."[154] However, not every philosophical act has to be tied with intuition in such a radical way. In fact, more often than not we join the intuitive experience of another thinker and simply continue its articulation. Still, in order for a philosophical act to occur I have to engage with the intuition of another, making it (also) my own. If I do not, I will end up being a plague to philosophy, as Gilles Deleuze puts it in reference to such criticism without creation. For instance, it is clear that Aristotle criticizes his predecessors while misunderstanding their thought; as a result he ends up producing caricatures of the pre-Socratics and, arguably, even Plato. Because Aristotle's verdicts shaped and molded Western scholarship for centuries, in this respect he, indeed, turned out to be a plague of philosophy. As we will see in a moment, Aristotle misinterprets Parmenides precisely because he is unable or unwilling to enter the intuition of the *Poem*. Thus, even though philosophical engagement cannot be guaranteed, one can facilitate it: today, for the most part, we try to provide for it by striving for total clarity and directness, whereas the Ancients preferred to make use of enigmas to further the same goal.

[154] I will take up this idea in the third chapter of this work.

Parmenides, for instance, designs the *Poem* in such a way as to incite the reader or the listener[155] to undergo the same experience. In other words, the *Poem* not only describes a certain event and a certain experience that occurred two and a half millennia ago, but also creates the conditions for the emergence of such an intuitive experience in its readers.

Enigmas are designed to seduce us: to draw us away from our customary or habitual patterns of thinking in order to expose us to or help us experience something entirely new, i.e. an event. They are meant to induce experiences that are not only, and even not primarily intellectual in nature. To solve an enigma we need to resort to intuition. Thus, the enigmas help us to access the first moment of philosophy, to begin philosophizing. Of course, after this moment—if the experience is to be a truly philosophical one—we must go beyond them in articulating this intuition, yet, the enigmatic beginning is essential for philosophy. An enigma can take a number of different forms. With Heraclitus it is usually no longer than a sentence that almost always expresses a seemingly incomplete or ambiguous thought; a sentence in which something—perhaps its grammar or syntax—is just slightly off. In Plato's case quite often the whole dialogue is designed to be an enigma, although smaller riddles might be discerned throughout the dialogue, as we will shortly see with the *Sophist*. If we look at the philosophical developments contemporary to us, then in the case of Deleuze we will confront the enigmatic concepts that set in motion his entire books, and, as a consequence, the books themselves become enigmas that constantly change their shape and, like chameleons, blend in with their environments. In other words, such ostensibly dissimilar works as Plato's dialogues, Parmenides' *Poem* and Deleuze's books have at least one common feature—instead of presenting straightforward, unambiguous answers they bewilder us by means of carefully crafted riddles, thus provoking an intuitive engagement with the world.[156] In other words, they seduce us, and in its first moment philosophy relies on and requires such seduction.

Enigmas enable a text to have dynamic structure, since they set up the conditions for an act of thought. Such movement is possible because formally speaking enigmas present us with a lack, and thus, as we will see in what follows, they are directly connected with the sophistical aspect.

In the *Poem* the importance of seduction for an act of thinking becomes apparent in that the daughters of the Sun who accompany Parmenides seduce Justice into letting them advance on their journey: "And with soft *seductive* words the girls *cunningly* persuaded her to push back immediately, just for them, the bar that bolts the gates."[157] Just as the women seduce Justice into opening the gates of Night and Day for Parmenides, and thus enable him to meet the goddess Persephone, so too the *Poem* as a

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[155] At the time of Parmenides, of course, almost every reader was also a listener, since the practice of silent reading was not unknown, yet did not take root in the West until after Augustine's time. In his *Confessions* Augustine remarks about Ambrose's unusual habit of silent reading: "When he was reading, his eyes ran over the page and his heart perceived the sense, but his voice and tongue were silent" (p. 92).

[156] Although ultimately or eventually quite different, yet Western enigmas have common roots with the oracular sayings or Buddhist koans.

[157] B1, lines 14-17, emphasis added.

whole seduces its reader into thinking. In a moment we will encounter the most far-reaching instance of such seduction—the enigma of the missing subject for the *is*. Another enigma related to this one is that of the roads that exist for thinking.[158] In addition, in B2 the goddess Persephone points out that the truth with which she entrusts Parmenides is persuasive—after all, the first route "is the way of Persuasion [Πειθοῦς]; for Persuasion is Truth's attendant"—thus indicating that we, the mortals, need to be seduced into truth.

As noted above, the repetition of all the motions, sounds, and shapes not only establishes Parmenides within the shamanic context but also, by creating a certain mood in the listener, induces him or her to experience what is being described. So, the text of the *Poem* through its enigmatic character develops or exercises the "organ" that enables us to intuit an event. Let's consider one of these enigmas: the circle or, better, the sphere where the center shares with the limits or the restraints; the sphere, where any one of its points is the center. Heraclitus' Fragment 103 comes to mind: For common [ξυνόν] are the center [ἀρχὴ] and the limits [πέρας] on the circumference of a circle.[159]

The goddess' words "It is all one [common, ξυνόν] to me where I am to begin; for I shall return there again"[160] are echoed in the movement of the chariot wheels and the other circular motions, pointing to the circle of the *Poem* itself: Parmenides, himself a mortal, begins his journey in the world of the appearances, and the goddess' words of the Way of Opinion end it with the illusory re-ordering of the same world.

There is yet another circle—the interpretative one. Writing about the *Poem* one is almost inevitably drawn into a circle which constantly threatens to become a vicious one: every time I think that I have found a way to explicate in a linear fashion this circular work of Parmenides, I cannot but notice the shortcomings of such an analysis. For the connections between the multiple centers of the *Poem* cannot be logically arranged or systematized without severing or deforming the circular or even spherical whole. Thus, apart from presenting us with the material for thought, the *Poem* also reveals to us something about the process of thinking: philosophical thought in the moment of its inception is spherical insofar as any one of its aspects can become the center, and so, a thought cannot be articulated without necessarily breaking its immediate intuitive oneness.

Even in these preceding sections when trying to discuss only one aspect of the *Poem* I have been crossing over or trespassing into the yet unexplored territories of the later sections, and even later chapters of this work. Such crossing of the logical borders or even writing in the borderlands is unavoidable given the sphericality of the *Poem*.

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[158] Lambros Couloubaritsis points out that among numerous difficulties or enigmas that the text of *Poem* has raised and maintained throughout the centuries, the three main ones are: the status of the proem, the meaning of the "is" and its relationship with thinking, as well as, finally, the relationship between truth and the opinions. Couloubaritsis remarks that certain conundrums that the *Poem* engenders are as radical today as ever. Cf. "Les multiples chemins de Parménide." In *Études sur Parménide. Tome II. Problèmes diinterprétations*. Direction de Pierre Aubenque. Paris: Librarie philosophique J. Vrin, 1987, pp. 25-43.

[159] Translated by me. Cf. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p.74.

[160] Translation of B5 is by David Gallop from Parmenides of Elea, *Fragments*, p. 59.

So, the *Poem*, being an enigma, seduces us into a different way of thinking, yet, we can become seduced only if we treat this work as a whole without prioritizing only some of its aspects. As we have seen, the *Poem* is an instance of oneness between the philosophical and ecstatic, or shamanic act. If dismembered, or re-arranged hierarchically through pointing out only the differences between the parts and treating some of them as insignificant, the *Poem* ossifies and turns into a historical relic. Its dynamic, enigmatic features recede to the margins, and the *Poem*'s prospect to be an organic, living text is foreclosed.

Even though my articulation of this work from now on will primarily focus on fragments B2 and B8, the argument that I will be developing will further reinforce the idea of the wholeness of the *Poem* by way of discussing the claim that philosophy is possible only with the assumption of the oneness of what is.

As we saw, the *Poem* is both an instance of intuitive moment of philosophy, and an attempt to provoke such experience in the reader. For Parmenides philosophical is also ecstatic experience, or *mythos* is one with *logos*.

All Is One

I would like to begin discussing the notion of oneness that I find in Parmenides with a short excursus into the meaning of the one in Heraclitus, since surveying the most recent interpretations of this notion in Heraclitus' thought will allow me to situate my own understanding of Parmenides' oneness. In doing so I will need to comment on the relationship between the two thinkers, thus simultaneously beginning to expose several common misinterpretations of Parmenides as well as suggesting the direction of my own argument, although the full strength of my interpretation over against these standard misreadings will not become apparent until the end of this chapter.

Western scholarship for the most part conceived Heraclitus and Parmenides as being at odds with each other. This happened largely due to the influence of Aristotle, who repeatedly blamed Heraclitus for violating the principle of non-contradiction—the very principle which Parmenides, according to the same Aristotle, is the first one to bring to philosophy's attention.[161] In addition, Aristotle saw Heraclitus as a proponent of the doctrine of perpetual flux—the position that ultimately entails the impossibility of knowledge,[162] whereas Parmenides is seen to be arguing for the stability of both being and knowledge.

The two philosophers are particularly supposed to disagree as to the role of the senses. Guthrie, for instance, argues that since Heraclitus gives preference to "the objects of sight and hearing," and Parmenides clearly deplores the senses, the two philosophers

[161] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* 1005b23, 1012a24, 1012a33, 1062a31, 1063b24.

[162] Cf. *Metaphysics*, 987a32, 1010a12.

are undoubtedly at odds with each other. [163] Guthrie bases such an interpretation of Heraclitus on Fragment 55, which, if translated correctly, reads: "Of whatever there is sight, hearing, learning: this I prefer."[164] Yet, it does not have to follow from this saying that the objects of the senses are given priority *because* they are sensed, but rather the fragment can be seen as stating that they are also sensed. In fact, I am convinced that this is what the saying suggests, and I find that the indication of it is the placement of "learning" [μάθησις from μανθάνω] alongside, yet after "sight" and "hearing." For "learning" makes more precise and at the same time unifies the two senses. In other words, it helps us understand that hearing and sight are valuable, since with their help we learn, but—and this is crucial—we learn not for the sake of learning, but because what we get to know through this process is preferable. Of course, this statement, just like many other sayings of Heraclitus, is ambiguous. It is designed to make us think of the most appropriate interpretation, or, as we know from Heraclitus' other fragments, it is designed to make us think according to the shared *logos*. But this, of course, would prevent us from concluding that Heraclitus makes a sharp distinction between learning through the senses and *listening*[165] to *logos* and then chooses the senses. So, Heraclitus is not simply or solely exhorting the senses, just like, as we will see, Parmenides is not denouncing or underrating them. Instead, as usual, Heraclitus creates an enigma, an ambiguity that forces us to think, or to join his thought; which makes his sayings dynamic. After all, before we can affirm that he prefers senses over thought we need to address the following questions: According to this saying, Heraclitus chooses that which is available through the senses, as well as by learning, rather than what? Moreover, since such an important role in his discourse is given to *logos*, what is the relationship between the senses and *logos*? I am convinced that the two are far from being opposed, and they certainly do not map onto the standard Western dichotomy between the senses and reason. But even if we cannot delve into these questions at the moment, we have seen that it is illegitimate to make Heraclitus into an adherent of the senses.

As for Parmenides, his B7 is cited to confirm his preference of reason, and the phrase κρῖναι λόγωι is translated as "judge by reason." [166] Having considered the proem, we know that Parmenides is far from deploring the senses. This point will become even further confirmed toward the end of the chapter, once we discuss what he means by thinking. So, for now it will suffice to point out that in this fragment the goddess says

> And don't let much-experienced *habit* force you to

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[163] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 1, p. 24. Cf. esp. p. 23ff.

[164] I find that the translation offered by Charles Kahn significantly diverges from the original Greek. He translates this fragment in the following way: "Whatever comes from sight, hearing, learning from experience: this I prefer," *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 35. The inexactness of this translation might explain some common misinterpretations of Heraclitus.

[165] Cf. fragments 1, 50, 34, 2, 17.

[166] Dilcher argues that "reason" is anachronistic in this context, and suggest translating *logos* as "rationality" (*Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 39). However, this is not much of an improvement, considering the kind of connotations that this notion carries. I will this issue ion much more detail in the last section of this chapter.

guide your *sightless* eye and *echoing* ear and
tongue along this way, but judge [κρῖναι] in favor of the
highly contentious demonstration of the truth
contained in these words [λόγωι] as spoken by me
[κρῖναι δέ λόγωι πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα].

Notice that it is not the senses that the goddess deplores, but the habit that rules the blind eye and the deafened ear, i.e. the senses that are not functioning well, not sensing. On this point consider two fragments by Heraclitus: "Not comprehending, they hear like the dead. The saying is their witness: absent while present" (B34) and "Eyes and ears are poor witnesses for men if their souls do not understand the language" (B107).[167]

Another major point of contention between the two thinkers is supposed to consist in that Heraclitus shows delight in paradoxes and oppositions, whereas for Parmenides oppositions and paradoxes expose "the quintessence of imbecility."[168] Some scholars argued that Heraclitus' work "would have outraged" Parmenides' "logical mind."[169] In unison with them Guthrie maintains that "for Parmenides Heraclitus was the arch-offender," since "he did not shrink from making the contradiction explicit yet still upheld it."[170] The tendency of Western scholarship to dismiss the proem might become more understandable in light of the need to present Parmenides as the precursor to logical or rational thought. However, the role that enigmatic discourse plays in the *Poem* exposes the affinity rather than opposition between the two pre-Socratic thinkers. Although Dilcher presents us with a much more convincing account of Heraclitus' position than many other scholars of Heraclitus, he also concludes that "Heraclitus differs *radically* from his contemporary Parmenides who recommends the reliability of his *logos* in contrast to the unsteady δόξα" or opinions.[171] In particular, Parmenides' B6 has been repeatedly interpreted as the evidence of the alleged polemic between Heraclitus and Parmenides on this point. In the fragment the reference is made to βροτοὶ or mortals who wander knowing nothing and claim "that to be and not to be are the same but not the same." Since Heraclitus is traditionally seen as the thinker who thrived on contradictions, then, the argument goes, he must be the one criticized. However, the term "mortals" is not appropriate to "a critical confrontation with Heraclitus. It is used in epic poetry as synonym for 'human beings' in general so as to point out the common lot of us all—in contrast to the immortals"[172] or gods. Anybody who misses this point is ignoring

[167] Translated by Kahn in *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, pp. 29, 35.

[168] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 1, p.24.

[169] Guthrie mentions J. Bernays and W. Kranz. Cf. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 1, p. 23.

[170] *Ibid*., p. 24.

[171] Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 118, emphasis added.

[172] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, p. 95. In "Heraclitus Studies" Gadamer writes that in B1 "Heraclitus is as radical as Parmenides is when the goddess Parmenides introduces speaks of the opinions of mortals" (Hans-Georg Gadamer. "Heraclitus Studies." *The Beginning of Knowledge*. New York: Continuum, 2002, p. 52).

the connections between Parmenides and the representatives of the *mythos* tradition such as Homer and Hesiod, i.e. ignores both historical and linguistic context in which Parmenides writes.

Regardless of whether one or both of the philosophers encountered the other's work, there is convergence, and not divergence of their thought. Indeed, as we will shortly see, the goddess' references to the mortals are consistent with Heraclitus' criticism of the limitations that are inherent in the mortal condition.[173] Even though Parmenides is unambiguous about the numerous shortcomings of the mortal opinions, these opinions and truth constitute one—the claim that will become much clearer by the end of the chapter.

In other words, even though there are significant differences between these two thinkers, for the purpose of understanding the pre-Socratics it is absolutely essential to grasp the convergences between them, and especially the most important one of all: their agreement as to the meaning of oneness.[174]

So, let's survey Heraclitus' notion of oneness as it emerges in the debate between two contemporary interpretations: Gadamer's and Dilcher's. As we will see, Dilcher takes up the position of radical immanence, criticizing Gadamer for attributing transcendence to Heraclitus' one. I think that one does not have to interpret Gadamer as harshly as Dilcher does, but this issue aside, I would like to suggest a notion of oneness distinct from either Dilcher's or that criticized by him.[175]

In his influential "Heraclitus Studies" Gadamer writes:

> What Heraclitus wants to say is clear: that, contrary to our own experience of distinguishing one thing from another, of opposing one to the other, we should realize that whatever might present itself so differently also harbors a kind of identity within the opposition itself. Heraclitus sees through the apparentness of the different and the opposite and everywhere discovers the one.[176]

It is understandable why Dilcher would find such a take on oneness disagreeable. The way in which it is explained in this passage, the one appears to be somehow beyond the differences, since it is supposed to underlie them. Rather, as we will see, one is *with* differences, or the opposition presupposes the ontologically prior oneness. Perhaps even more importantly, Gadamer's use of the word "identity" is especially misleading in this passage, since the standard notion of identity entails exclusion of any difference whatsoever: A=A. Clearly, Heraclitus does not mean identity when he speaks of the one.

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[173] Consider, for instance, Heraclitus' fragments 1, 2, 34, 17, 19.

[174] As Gadamer insightfully remarks about the pre-Socratic philosophers, "only the common motives and problems that unite [them] promise an entry" into the beginnings of Western philosophy. Hans-Georg Gadamer. "Plato and Presocratic Cosmology." *The Beginning of Knowledge*, p. 104. Gadamer states that "the Aristotelian and Hegelian Schema adopted by the nineteenth-century historicism according to which Parmenides is regarded as a critic of Heraclitus" is clearly incorrect (*The Beginning of Philosophy*, p. 93).

[175] Schindler in his essay "The Community of the One and the Many: Heraclitus on Reason" often comes close to formulating such a middle ground.

[176] Gadamer, "Heraclitus Studies," p. 48-9.

Thus, when Gadamer claims that we, the mortals, are deluded insofar as we "are not in the position to recognize the same essence in all the various things that we encounter"[177] it is indeed difficult not to take him as distinguishing between two hierarchical levels or two kinds of being: the things perceived through the senses and their essences. But if we are generous to Gadamer, we can take him to be making a distinction between the appearances and being, where by the appearances we mean every *thing* that is, i.e. everything except being. In this case the notion of the appearances would include a tree, an image of the tree in water, its image on canvas, the word "tree" and so on. Such a distinction would correspond exactly to the one that the goddess makes in the *Poem*, as well as the one that I am making in this work, and according to it the appearances are not other than being, but also *are*. If thus modified, Gadamer's thought would be: the appearances are by asserting their differences (and the difference), and because they *are*, all is one.

The following quotation justifies what might seem like too generous of an interpretation of Gadamer: "The Heraclitean message is not differentiation, exactly, but perceiving the one in everything that is different."[178] So that when multiplicity is affirmed by Heraclitus, "we must simultaneously keep in mind precisely the one that alone is the true"[179] or the one that enables these differences to be. That is, Gadamer points out that we need to be able to discern being in many different beings. That is why he insists that the one and the many are "simultaneous" in the strictest possible sense. A generous reading of such an assertion would confirm Gadamer to be referring to the non-hierarchical nature of the relationship between being and the appearances.

Dilcher does not extend a benefit of a doubt to a position like that of Gadamer. Instead, calling its notion of oneness vague unity, he ties to expose its incompatibility with the thought of Heraclitus. This looser form of unity does not commit the mistake of collapsing all things into each other, as logical identity does, but instead calls for "an essential connection, interdependence, or co-existence of the opposites," or of the differences more generally.[180] Dilcher argues that as a consequence such unity turns out to be "underlying" or on "a higher level,"[181] and, as a consequence, leads to ossification of thought and life: "it is illicit to merge everything into one and to fix the point of unity."[182] Because, of course, as soon as we get a stable object or claim, hierarchies and valuations begin to develop. Thus, Dilcher's interpretation of Heraclitus emphasizes the "intrinsic ambivalences," the "precarious balance of forces," the "tension and unrest that carries life and prohibits any harmonical solution."[183] In other words, Dilcher tends to

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[177] *Ibid*., p. 56.

[178] *Ibid*., p. 50.

[179] *Ibid*., p. 56.

[180] Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 104.

[181] Cf. *ibid*.

[182] *Ibid*., p. 114.

[183] *Ibid*., p. 114, 116.

another extreme than the one criticized by him. In trying to assure flexibility he denies any firm ground: Heraclitus' interpreter, Dilcher claims, "is not allowed to… extract any 'harmony' which eventually would be devoid of any ambivalence," because "it is this tension and unrest which carries on life and prohibits any harmonical solution."[184] Instead Dilcher proposes a dialectical understanding of oneness, i.e. "a process of successive grasping and abandoning. No fixed knowledge is preserved; no firm opinions and doctrines are constructed which one could ultimately hold fast and carry along."[185] True, no knowledge is ever fixed, insofar as knowledge is always *a* knowledge and is, when all is said and done, a harmonized set of opinions. Yet, as Heraclitus himself acknowledges on multiple occasions, all is one, and this—although it is itself a formulation, and thus, open to misunderstanding as well as understanding, i.e. to further articulations—is, after all, an axiom, or truth that provides us with the point of stability that enables any "successive grasping and abandoning." This is the Archimedean point that allows us to move the world by, first and foremost, giving us the world to move.

Misconceiving or letting this crucial truth escape by overemphasizing the constant movement or the instability of thought and things, Dilcher makes several important mistakes. As already mentioned, he misconceives the relationship between Heraclitus and Parmenides when he writes: "Heraclitus differs radically from his contemporary Parmenides who recommends the reliability of his logos in contrast to the unsteady δόξα."[186] First of all, *logos* and the opinions are not Parmenides', but those of the goddess. Moreover, even though Parmenides distinguished between *logos* and the opinions—just like Heraclitus does—the point of stability for him is not *logos* alone but its oneness with δόξα.

The second of Dilcher's errors consists in relying on the river-fragment to explain what he means by the dialectical one: "As they step into the same rivers, other and still other waters flow upon them."[187] He points out correctly that the river as such *is* the constant flow of the water, it is the difference of the waters or waves. From this he concludes that "the river provides a vivid image of a movement which yet produces stability."[188] And this is true, if we emphasize the word "image," for perhaps the river itself is nothing more than the sum of its waves, or the sum of their movements, whereas the one is always more than the sum of all particular beings. In other words, Dilcher is right in pointing out that the one is not selfsame, for it is always different than itself, yet, he lets go of the one's *other* aspect—its all-embracing harmony that enables the differences without rigidifying them or itself.

In addition, Dilcher conceives the oneness of opposites or differences as a succession: "They are not presented as being invariably opposed and replacing each

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[184] *Ibid*., p. 115, 116.

[185] *Ibid*., p. 118.

[186] *Ibid*.

[187] Since Dilcher does not for the most part provide translations of the fragments, I provide here Kahn's translation from *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 53.

[188] Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 114.

other externally, but as *successively* transforming into each other."[189] Even though this succession is not supposed to be "external," it seems to necessitate some kind of a temporal sequence: right now the road is the road down, even if in a moment it will be the road up. Even though this is the case, or this *too* is true, there must be some other, more profound, notion of oneness, to which the notion of succession is inapplicable. To illustrate it by using the same image of the road: the road is, and so, is *simultaneously* up and down, or, is different *within* itself.

Yet, to do Dilcher justice, there are several very acute observations regarding the meaning of oneness that he makes. When discussing Fragment 5—"They do not comprehend how a thing agrees at variance with itself; it is an attunement turning back on itself, like that of the bow and the lyre"[190]—he points out that the one is not the many that somehow have been unified, but rather the one is that which relates to itself in twofold way by being simultaneously at variance and in agreement with itself, "or rather *in* differing from itself it accords with itself."[191] Earlier Dilcher pointed out that there is no third term that resolves Heraclitean oppositions,[192] and now we know why—because the first and the second terms are in accord by virtue of there being one.[193] In other words, the one is both itself and the other to itself, and we can understand the opposites or difference only because there is the one.

Even though the one, and thus thinking it, is necessarily paradoxical, or, as Dilcher puts it, there is "intrinsic ambivalence" in such thought,[194] it is not inconsistent. Although thinking oneness bends or stretches the laws of logic, it does not contradict them. "There is not a single fragment [of Heraclitus] which states a formal contradiction," writes Dilcher.[195] Which confirms once again, that Aristotle and those influenced by him err when radically opposing Heraclitus and Parmenides.

So, though Dilcher criticizes Gadamer misconceiving the Heraclitean one, his own rendition of oneness is just as inaccurate, although in a different way, since he sways in a direction opposite to the one he criticizes.[196] If Gadamer stresses the immediacy of

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[189] *Ibid*., p. 108, emphasis added.

[190] Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 65.

[191] Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 109.

[192] Cf. *ibid*., p. 103.

[193] This is the move that Heraclitus makes in B57, "The teacher of the most is Hesiod. It is him they know as knowing most, who did not recognize day and night: for there is (the) one" (translation by Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 37, adjusted by me). As Dilcher is right to emphasize, the last phrase, ἔστι γὰρ ἕν, is not asserting the identity or the sameness of day and night, but rather the fact that we will not get to know day and night until we know that there is (the) one.

[194] Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 114.

[195] *Ibid*., p. 106.

[196] Schindler rightly criticizes Dilcher for a one-sided approach. Cf. Schindler, "The Community of the One and the Many: Heraclitus on Reason," p. 415.

the one, Dilcher wagers on the process of mediation—the process that he, unfortunately, does not properly conceive, insofar as he lets cause-effect relationships structure the one.

Here is how Schindler conceives the difference between the two positions:

> For Gadamer, the simultaneity of unity and difference means that things which seem in ordinary experience to be opposed are in fact immediately one; this unity is not produced through mediation as a result of their relation (which would imply a logical succession), but is always already there…. Such a perspective requires, in turn, a notion of unity as essentially *transcendent*.[197]

Here I have to disagree with Schindler, for regardless whether or not Gadamer leans toward or implies that the one is transcendent, Schindler is mistaken to believe that transcendence is a necessary feature of the one that is immediate. Transcendence, in the sense in which it has been persistently criticized in the twentieth century, is not a feature of Heraclitus'—and as we will soon see—Parmenides' oneness.

From the discussion above the following aspects of the one become evident: the one is not a result or a process of mediation, but is immediate; the one is also not the identity of the opposites, or what I have been calling more generally the appearances; neither is it their sum; moreover, the one is not transcendent in the sense of being set over and above the appearances, and thus, hierarchically distinct; yet it does not have the same ontological status as the appearances, and this is why we can call it imminently transcendent; yet, it is simultaneous with difference; finally, the one is the one with differences.

This characterization of the one is equally applicable to Parmenides' notion of oneness. For, after all, how can Parmenides and Heraclitus not agree on what one is, if both are engaged in thinking being? Or, if *logos* is indeed shared, how can they not agree in conceiving one.[198] Heidegger too notes this: "Heraclitus, to whom one ascribes the doctrine of becoming, in stark contrast to Parmenides, in truth says the same as Parmenides. He would not be one of the greatest of the Greeks if he said anything else."[199]

So, let's consider the way in which all is one for Parmenides.

Before I proceed, let me state—for the time being rather dogmatically—that I will be treating ontological and epistemological claims as parallel. Since for the pre-Socratic philosophers there is no discursive distance between what we came to know as the two different "branches" of Western philosophy, our contemporary practice of separating epistemological and metaphysical considerations when discussing the thought of the ancients leads to numerous misunderstandings. Thus, in this chapter my assumption will be that the relationship between truth and the opinions of mortals can be almost perfectly mapped onto the relationship between the *is* and the appearances. Support for what

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[197] *Ibid*., p. 415.

[198] Cf. *ibid*., esp. p. 416ff.

[199] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 103.

might presently look like a dogmatic move will be shortly elucidated with the help of the both famous and infamous assertions of B3 that has been rather inaccurately translated as "Mind and Being are the same": "τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ ε ναι," and B8, 34: "ταὐτὸν δ' ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὕνεκέν ἐστι νόημα."

Keeping this in mind, let's immerse ourselves into the second part of the *Poem*—the part that consists almost exclusively of the goddess's *mytho-logos*. In what became known as Fragment 2, she declares:

> Come now, and I will tell you (and you must carry my account [μῦθος] away with you when you have heard it)
> the only ways of enquiry that are to be thought of.
> The one, that [it] is and that it is impossible for [it] not to be,
> is the path of Persuasion (for she attends upon Truth);
> the other, that [it] is not and that it is needful that [it] not be,
> that I declare to you is an altogether indiscernible track:
> for you could not know what is not--that cannot be done
> --nor indicate it.

In the original Greek of this passage, as well as of the passages that follow, no subject is provided for the verb "is." This particular translation from the authoritative anthology by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield acknowledges this lack of the subject.[200] Because of this lacuna—which even the suggested "it" is unable to adequately fill—much time and effort has been spent on trying to uncover what exactly the goddess means when she says "is" and "is not." The One, the Good, Actuality, Mind, God, Substance, Absolute Idea, Power, the Unknown, pure Difference, Reality, Being have been suggested, among others, as the possible candidates for the missing subject.[201]

Guthrie, for instance, writes: "Like an ancient Descartes, he [Parmenides] asked himself what, if anything, it was impossible not to believe; and to him the answer was *est*: something exists."[202] The parallel with Descartes is most appropriate here, and its significance will become especially apparent in the third chapter in relation to the oneness of thinking and being. But as for the subject that Guthrie supplies for the *is*, it is most inappropriate: the Greek ἔστιν of this passage is by no means equivalent to "something exists."

Cornford supplies "the real" as the referent of the barren *is*. He writes: "The *real* exists and can never be non-existent…. 'Being' has for Parmenides a strict and absolute sense: a *thing* either is or is not,"[203] even though the Greek neither provides us with the word for "real" nor suggests that we are concerned here with the existence of *things*.

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[200] G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, M. Schofield. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 245.

[201] Cf. Stein, *Persephone Unveiled*, p. 151.

[202] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 1, p. 20.

[203] Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, p. 33, emphasis added.

Kirk and Raven follow a similar path, explaining that "Either a *thing* is or it is not,"[204] as well as making a rather presumptuous suggestion that "Parmenides himself was unconscious" of the ambiguity between the predicative and the existential senses of ἐστι.[205]

The plethora of possible subjects only emphasizes the initial emptiness. However, the absence of the subject is no accidental omission on the part of the goddess, or some literary awkwardness on Parmenides' part. Instead, no subject is named because any attempt to name the *is* at this point destroys the simplicity or oneness of the claim that the goddess is making. In other words, any name would necessarily be counterproductive for or even destructive of the arguments that follow this statement, and especially the arguments of B8.

Yet, if we do have to choose among the possible candidates for the subject of this mysterious *is* then, I think, the most convincing case has been made for the verbal noun "being."[206] Yet even then the substitution fails, if only for the reason that the *is* is doubled, by being split into two grammatical forms, and in a moment, when discussing the ways of inquiry that *are* for thinking, we will see the significance of such a differentiation or separation. So, even Stein, while advocating the insertion of "being" for the missing subject, notes a limitation of such a substitution:

> The very syntax of the language seeks to betray it. If we say "Being is," there is on the one hand a subject, Being, and on the other a verb, "is," that affirms it. But the intuition of utter simplicity of "…is" is already compromised, as if Being were completely separate from its own Being, or as if, as subject of the sentence, it hung in expectation, waiting to see whether the verb would confirm its existence or deny it.[207]

In a rather metaphorical way Stein suggests that the emptiness that was supposed to disappear only expands with the introduction of a subject.

Regarding the same issue Manchester writes:

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[204] G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 1963, p. 269, emphasis added.

[205] Even though I am quite aware of how much nineteenth and twentieth century scholarship on Parmenides has been focused around this distinction, I will not consider it or treat this debate in my work, since such a distinction and its theoretical implications are a product of our own era. I do wish to point out, however, that it is wrong to assume that Parmenides was unconscious of the difference that underlies this distinction, i.e. that he uses "to be" without being aware of the implications of his words. As Dilcher writes about Heraclitus and the law of non-contradiction "it will…not do to refer to the underdeveloped state of logic at his time. True as it is that certain distinctions were not available to him, it does not follow that he mistakenly ignored them, but rather that they cannot have played an important role in his thinking. Had they been relevant for him, he would have created the distinctions which he needed (as Parmenides has abundantly done)" (p. 107). But the reason why Parmenides does not thematize this distinction is because for him metaphysical and epistemological considerations stand in a relationship different from the one both presupposed and problematized in the recent trends of Western philosophy.

[206] Among others, Charles Stein does this in his book *Persephone Unveiled*.

[207] Stein ,*Persephone Unveiled*, p. 181.

> What is the 'it' that is the subject of pervasive assertions that "(it) is"? For my reading, it is certainly not any existent 'thing', nor is it this or that content of experience, whether perceptual or imaginary. So, is it 'everything', considered simply with regard to its existing or being, and with that characteristic taken globally? Yes—except in the context of the *Way of Truth*, such statements are so vague as to be useless.[208]

Manchester explains that instead of simply focusing on these few lines "We must capture the *movement of thought* that carries us along, signpost by signpost…. There is a convenient way to designate such a subject. Virtually everyone who writes about Parmenides has been using it all along, namely *truth*."[209] But he also notes that writing "truth" next to the mysterious *is* is not much better than "calling that subject X. But that in itself is a virtue." In other words, the goddess' vagueness is intended to be an indication of something, and so, if we want to fill the emptiness in any meaningful way we also have to be vague. Manchester recognizes that ultimately we must withhold our tendency to fill in this gap, since "…the only way to find out how Parmenides thinks of his subject is by moving along and completing the course" of the *Poem*.[210]

Similarly, Kingsley takes special care to point out that "In those lines spoken by the goddess about the two paths of inquiry, there is not the slightest explanation of what she is talking about when she says "is not" or "is." The subject of the verbs is left in the dark. And yet there is a very good reason for that. This lack of clarity is the core of Parmenides' logic."[211] Yet, even Kingsley throughout his book on Parmenides uses the noun "reality" as a subject for the *is*!

I am convinced that the impulse to fill in the missing subject, and especially such a tendency on the part of those who are fully aware of the consequences of this act, essentially supports the point that I am trying to make. For this tendency makes explicit the relationship between the *is* and the appearances, truth and the opinions.

But before I can say more about this I need to turn to the issue of the different ways or roads of inquiry. And now I will provide Kingsley's translation of the same passage, since in his translation certain aspects that need to be highlighted receive a much more precise formulation:

> I will do the talking; and it's up to you
> to carry away my words once you have heard them.

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[208] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 118.

[209] *Ibid*., p. 118. There are four signposts listed by the goddess at the beginning of B8. They correspond to the four arguments presented in this fragment. I borrow this term, as well as this way of dividing B8 from Manchester's *The Syntax of Time*, who, in turn, adopts it from A. P. D. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970). Manchester acknowledged, though, that "pathmarks" would have been a better term to use in this context, since "signposts" is an overtranslation of the Greek term σήματα. Consequently, in what follows I will, for the most part, use "pathmark" in reference to this notion.

[210] *Ibid*., p. 119.

[211] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 67-68.

What I will tell you is which roads of inquiry,
and which roads alone, exist for thinking.
The one route, that *is, and is not possible not to be*,
is the way of Persuasion; for Persuasion is
Truth's attendant. And as for the other,
that *is not, and is necessary not to be*:
this, I can tell you, is a path from which no news
returns. For there is no way you can recognize
what is not—there is no traveling that path—
or tell anything about it.[212]

In this passage the goddess speaks of ὁδοί, the roads of inquiry that exist for thinking: the road of the *is*, and the road of the *is not*. The road of the *is* is here called by the goddess the road of *persuasion*, or Πειθώ. As explained earlier, in doing this the goddess irreversibly connects truth with the act of seduction, thus acknowledging the role of intuition in philosophy. We might say then that the road of the *is* is accessible through intuition, and that we get persuaded or seduced into traveling down this path. The second road—the road of the *is not*—is, according to the goddess, unrecognizable, impassable, and unspeakable. The road of the *is not* simply does not exist; there is no such road. The phrase "no news returns," according to the conventions of ancient poetry, refers to death and its silence—"in the poetry of Homer anyone about whom 'no news returns' was simply somebody who was assumed to be dead."[213]

So, the first words or, more precisely, the μῦθον that the goddess entrusts to Parmenides are that only the *is* is a road of inquiry; only the road of the *is* exists for thinking, whereas the road of the *is not* necessarily is not for thinking.[214]

In other words, at this point in the text it becomes obvious that we—just as Parmenides himself—are not presented with any choice as to what road to follow. There is no decision to be made. Yet, at the same time it is difficult to conceive and thus accept the only road that is given to us, and this difficulty is tied to our tendency to fill in the missing subject: when we try to think the *is* we get distracted by the absence of the subject, or, ironically, we get confused by what is not. But when we come up with a subject that fills in, albeit imperfectly, this apparent gap, we destroy the simplicity of the goddess' claim. Instead of acknowledging that only the *is* is, we—the mortals—end up wandering in circles.

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[212] *Ibid*., p. 60.

[213] *Ibid*., p. 65. One might wonder whether the goddess is not contradicting herself at the very moment when she *says* that this road is *unspeakable*. Although later in our analysis a different answer will emerge, at this point it might be useful to distinguish, as Plato, among others, does in the *Sophist* (237e), between uttering and speaking something: it might be possible to utter non-being, but in that case I will not be speaking, let alone actually saying something. So here, the goddess is merely uttering a warning against speaking about non-being.

[214] In preparation for the discussion of the oneness of thinking and being, I would like to point out that the goddess uses the noun νόησις here. She says "εἰσι νοῆσαι" which can be literally translated as the roads which "be for thinking," for νόησις.

For the evidence of this let's look at another place where the issue of the roads comes up. In Fragment 6 the goddess yet again speaks of the roads for thinking, accompanying her discussion by the phrase "You ponder that!"—a standard formula used by the oracles, and a sign that we are approaching an enigma.

> It is necessary both to say and to think being to be, for [it] is to be;
> but nothing is not. You ponder that!
> This is the first road of inquiry that I hold you back from.
> But then I hold you back as well from the one that
> mortals fabricate, twin-heads, knowing nothing.
> For helplessness in their chests is what steers their
> wandering minds as they are carried along in a daze,
> deaf and blind at the same time: indistinguishable,
> undistinguishing crowds who reckon that to be and
> not to be are the same and not the same. And, for
> all of them, the route they follow is a path that keeps turning
> backwards on itself.[215]

Yet another time the goddess mentions the road of the *is not*, and now she is explicit about her desire to prevent Parmenides from considering it seriously. But why should she even bother extending such warnings, if there is no such road to begin with? Because Parmenides is a mortal just like the rest of us, to whom he is supposed to deliver the goddess' words, her μῦθον. Thus, he is prone to fabricating a road—the strange route other than both the *is* and the *is not*, the path that often appears to be that of non-being.

There has been much discussion in the secondary literature on Parmenides about the number of roads that are mentioned in the *Poem*. Some scholars argued that only two roads are acknowledged by the goddess,[216] and others pointed out that they must be three in number.[217] I think that the confusion about the number of the roads is far from accidental, since there are several perfectly legitimate and logically justifiable positions on the number of roads that are discussed in the *Poem*. The multiplicity of these

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[215] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 83. The translation of lines 1 and 2 has been adjusted by me. In the translation of the lines 9 and 10 I follow Manchester's *The Syntax of Time*, p. 113. Whereas Kingsley renders these lines "that being and non-being are the same but not the same."

[216] The main argument advanced by the proponents of this position, among whom are Diels, Burnet and Taran, is that everything that does not agree with the route of the is belongs to the path of non-being. Cf. Lambros Couloubaritsis. "Les multipples chemins de Parmenide." In *Études sur Parménide*. *Tome II*, p. 25 and ff.
Panagiotis Thanassas claims that the third way "does not at all contradict the assurance given in B2, namely that there are 'only' two routes; for this 'third' way is not a real route at all, but a presentation and critique of the inability of human beings to clearly and resolutely distinguish the 'only' two ontological routes" (211-212, "How Many *Doxai* Are There in Parmenides?" *Rhizai*, III.2, 2006). I completely disagree with him, the third way is not a critique, for then why would the goddess caution Parmenides about traveling down it? Besides, the second route does not have an ontological status, although a claim about it is an ontological claim.

[217] Heidegger is among the latter, cf. his *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 116 and following.

positions is not accidental, but reflects the ontological status of the roads that the goddess mentions, i.e. the fact that the second one is not, and the third one is the road of constant uncertainty. So, this disagreement is symbolic of the ways of knowing themselves. For instance, the "dispute over whether a third route exists or doesn't exist is a perfect reflection of the route itself as Parmenides portrays it: completely self-contradictory, a path on which things exist, and yet at the same time don't exist."[218]

The dispute in the scholarly literature tends to focus on whether the route of the opinions is distinct from that of the *is not*, or whether, by virtue of being different from the *is* it must be included in the second road of non-being. In this latter case the weight is placed on B2. Even though I will address this issue in what follows, I would like to suggest that several different ways to count the roads are possible in yet another sense. According to one such position—the standpoint that I will later call philosophical—there is only one road, but it is the one of the first and the third. According to another position—that of the mortal—the number of roads constantly fluctuates. The mortal is confused about the number of the ways, for occasionally he or she distinguishes between his or her own and some other path, but at other times he or she simply supposes that there is only one way of knowing—the mortal one. This position essentially misunderstands both the status of the other two roads and itself. Yet, as we will see, the mortal understanding resembles most closely the philosophical one, but precisely because of such resemblance the difference between the two is immense. Finally, it is possible to distinguish between the three roads discussed in the *Poem*—the approach that is necessarily sophistical, since it tries to assert what is not, or the second road. In other words, although one could not know or point to this second road, yet it is possible to create a semblance of it, and this is precisely what such a standpoint does without realizing that this semblance is actually a part of the third road, and thus, ultimately, of the *is*. But this will become much more evident later.

Let's consider more closely this strange route of the mortal opinions. If we look closely at the passage of B6 and the description of this third road we notice first of all that it has been fabricated by the mortals whom the goddess calls "twin-heads"—the term that in Ancient Greek refers to a point in the road where the road splits off into two. But how are we to understand this term in relation to the mortals? As Kingsley notes, "twin-heads" is also a common expression for someone who is incapable of making a decision because "confronted with an impossible quandary."[219] So, the mortals insofar as they are mortals are incapable of choosing, forever destined to waver between the two alternatives, one of which is not, and so, is not an alternative. In B2 the goddess asserted that there are only two ways of inquiry—the road of the *is* and the road of the *is not*—thus, ultimately, the mortals are trying to choose between the *is* and the *is not*. But this, of course, is an act that undermines itself, a self-contradictory and self-destructive move. Since there is no second road, there is also no decision to make: it has been decided. Therefore, their effort to choose is a semblance of action that creates the world of appearances. Thus, the third road—the strange road of indecision, the route of misunderstanding the *is* is a mortal fabrication.

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[218] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 107.

[219] *Ibid*., p. 101.

This third road is the mortal effort to understand the oneness between being and the appearances while being ignorant that this is what they are trying to understand. This route reveals that the mortals take being and non-being to be opposites or contraries: as the goddess puts it, the mortals reckon that "to be and not to be are the same and not the same."[220] Where the logic of "the same and not the same" is the logic of the composition of opposites. For example, wet and dry are the same and not the same. However, wet and cold cannot be conceived in this fashion, and so, they are *not* the same and not the same.[221] But from what has been asserted by the goddess in B2 the *is* and the *is not* are not a part of such logical structure: the *is* cannot be the opposite or the contradictory of the *is not*. "Being has nothing alongside it; and even that is misstated, because there *is* no nothing, it is impossible to have any nothing to think with or about. Being has no opposite, no other. It does not differentiate itself from anything else. It is an inside without an outside."[222] Yet, the mortals mistakenly treat them as opposites, and in doing so fabricate the third path. The path itself, therefore, has an illusory ontological status—it *seems* to be. This is why the third road is not mentioned in B2—it is not in the way the first road *is*, and the second one *is not*. That is, it is not decisively, persuasively. Instead, it keeps "turning backwards on itself," or consists of infinite, incessant stomping on the same spot—the place of the illusory fork in the road. Walking around it we, the mortals, produce an amalgam of uncertainty: a distorted, chaotic heap of the opinions and of the appearances.

As opposed to the meaningless and illusory commotion that the mortals create, the *is* insofar as it is whole is called by the goddess untrembling: "the word 'untrembling', the programmatic title for these lines [B8, 26-29], shows that what is excluded from the wholeness of truth in Signpost 2 is not motion in general, as a species of change, but tremor, disquiet, uncertainty."[223] There is no uncertainty in the *is*—there simply cannot be, since there is no choice to be made, there is only one road, the *is*.

So, the third road cannot be said to either be or not be in the same way the other two can be said to be or not be. In fact, another step needs to be made in order to understand the way in which this road is. Still, the discussion of the roads that are for thinking enables us for the first time to approach the oneness that makes philosophy possible: there *is* only one road for inquiry, the first one.[224]

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[220] B6, 10-11. For instance, Kirk and Raven in *The Presocratic Philosophers* consider that the first and the second roads "are directly contrary one to the other" (p. 269).

[221] Cf. Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 113.

[222] *Ibid*.

[223] *Ibid*., p. 122.

[224] Yet, as we will see in the course of this work, the third road also *is*, and ultimately, the philosopher is the one who can make it seemly, but for this, along with knowing truth, she needs to be shrewd or have the quality of μῆτις. What is this quality? In B6 it becomes clear that because the mortals are by their nature incapable of thinking that only the *is* is "*helplessness* in their chests is what steers their wandering minds as they are carried along in a daze" (B6, emphasis added). It is our helplessness that steers us, that leads us into creating the third path. Μῆτις is the opposite of such helplessness, or ἀμηχανία. (Cf. Kingsley's discussion of μῆτις in both *Reality* and *The Dark Places of Wisdom* .) Possessing the quality of μῆτις meant for the Greeks being alert and cunning, being competent in navigation, in finding one's way, having an

As a way of returning to the issue of the missing subject for the *is* I will point out one more passage from the middle of the arguments of B8:

> And what exists for thinking is the same
> as the cause for thought. For you won't find thinking
> without the being in which it has been uttered.
> For there is nothing else and will be nothing else
> apart from being, because Fate has bound it to be
> whole; unmoving. Its name shall be everything—
> every single name that mortals invented
> convinced they all are true: birth and death,
> existence, non-existence, change of place, alteration
> of bright color.[225]

Right after the goddess asserts the fact that Fate or Μοῖρα has bound being in such a way that there is nothing outside of or other than it comes the puzzling passage about naming, in which yet another time we encounter the mortals, and their fabrication. In this passage the goddess holds a ceremony of naming, and it is here that the riddle-like character of the *Poem* especially comes to the fore, as the answer to the enigma of the missing subject of the *is* is being given to us: up until that point, the *is* is subjectless or

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ability to notice and follow subtle signs. μῆτις is the intensity of being alert, it is the power of focus while being aware of the whole. Which means that μῆτις is closely associated with intuition, or the ability to know in the most immediate fashion, the moment when there is no separation, no parts.
The one who has this quality is a very clever mortal, a shrewd one. As we will see later, this quality is absolutely indispensable for the philosopher. One of the most vivid illustrations of μῆτις is found in Homer's *Odyssey*. It appears in a passage which describes how Odysseus is trapped with his companions inside a cave of the great one-eyed monster Polyphemus. Because Odysseus has the quality of μῆτις he introduces himself to Polyphemus as οὔτις, or Nobody. And when Odysseus blinds the giant, and the other Cyclopes gather outside the cave upon hearing the cries of their friend they ask: surely, μή τίς—an alternative form for "nobody"—is trying to kill you? And Polyphemus has to answer that, indeed, οὔτις, or Nobody is killing him (cf. Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 225-226). Of course, after such a response the reassured monsters disperse, and Odysseus manages to get out of the cave, and leave the island. The alertness and the cunning of Odysseus, the intensity of his focus on the ultimate goal of reaching his home in Ithaca — the focus that does not prevent him from being continuously aware of and engaged with his immediate situation—is what enables him to finally attain this goal.
μῆτις along with an allusion to this passage from the *Odyssey* turns up in the third part of the *Poem*, becoming yet another connecting thread that runs between the different parts of the *Poem* pointing to the oneness of this work. The goddess asks Parmenides to learn the "disguising cosmos" of her words (B8, lines 50-61) "so that nobody [ὥς οὐ μή ποτέ τίς] among the mortals will ever manage, in practical judgment, to ride past you" (B8, 60-61. *Ibid*., 221). ὥς οὐ μή ποτέ τίς is a double negative through which Parmenides simultaneously alludes to μή τίς and οὔτις, the two forms for "nobody," as well as to the quality of μῆτις that figures so prominently in the passage from the Odyssey.
So, the mortals ought to be steered by μῆτις. In fact, as we will see with the help of Plato, ultimately the philosopher needs to acquire this quality in order to be able to give order to the appearances.

[225] B8, 34-41. Tr. Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 190.

nameless because the time did not yet come for it to be named, because its simplicity has not yet been complicated.[226]

Moreover, to our great amazement, the name—our missing subject—that the goddess allows to be given to the *is* is everything! Every single name, including Actuality, The Good, Mind, Substance, Reality and Being and anything else that can be attributed to the *is*. By augmenting her own earlier *mytho-logos* the goddess shows us simultaneously the significance and the insignificance of naming, while pointing to the intimate way in which being is connected with the appearances. Earlier in the text she identified the mortals as lost, as constantly standing at a fork in the road not knowing where to go, taking one step in one direction, and then turning back in indecision, and starting off in another direction. The same clueless mortals are now allowed to name the *is* however they want! Even so, through this act of transferring the power of naming to us the goddess once again emphasizes the oneness of the *is*, as well as motions towards the ontological status of the appearances. Since now, paradoxically enough, the illusory world created by the mortals is also included in the *is*.

So, if we look back at the nameless *is* of B2 we have to admit that we both cannot name it, and cannot not name it. Being mortals, we cannot name the *is* because any name ruins its simplicity, and so, undermines the strength of the arguments that follow.[227] But, at the same time, we cannot *not* name the *is* because in order to get even close to making sense of the arguments we need to think of some subject. So, we seem to be standing at a dead end or walking around in circles: we cannot understand the goddess' *logos* either way. Being led into the state of *aporia*, we are forced to distinguish between the two moments of philosophical thinking: the intuitive and the discursive. Intuitively we can grasp the simplicity of the *is* in B2, but when we try to understand this simplicity, i.e. when we articulate our intuition we encounter the many-named complex *is*. This complexity or multifacetedness of being is inextricably tied to our mortality—our tendency and ability to name separates or cuts through the oneness, changing the configuration of the appearances. From the perspective of the *is* the separation is deceptive, yet this deception is necessary, for ultimately it sets limits for the *is*. So, from the moment in B8 when the goddess allows the mortals to name the *is* the deception of the appearances is legitimized and the fact of their belonging to the *is* affirmed. At the structural level of the *Poem* this is represented by the fact that δόξα makes an appearance at the heart of the Way of Truth, in Pathmark 2 of B8. Thus, we are already beginning to see that the deceptive appearances need not carry a negative connotation that often accompanies them. I will have more to say about this when I discuss the deceptive cosmos in the following section.

To sum up, the nameless *is* or being in its simplicity can be only apprehended intuitively. In the *Poem* this becomes apparent in the fact that only one road remains after the second one shows its impossibility, and the third one its inconsistency. Yet, contrary to the usual interpretations of the *Poem*, this oneness proves itself to be complex—it cannot but be the oneness with difference, since "everything" of the mortal appearances is included in it, and the third backward turning road is suddenly admitted

[226] Cf. Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 196.

[227] Cf. the following chapter on the *Sophist*, and especially the argument on the thing and its name.

into the simplicity of the *is*, thereby irrevocably confirming the oneness of the *is*, while simultaneously complicating it. Not even the illusory world fabricated by the indecisive mortals is able to muddle the waters of being, or rather, the mortal chaos proves itself to be as respectable as the *is*, and it only *seems* that the mortal namings compromise the oneness of the *is*. Which reminds us of the discussion at the beginning of Plato's *Parmenides*: young Socrates is asked by the great Parmenides whether hair, mud and other "trivial and undignified objects" have a form. He replies "Not at all," while nevertheless suggesting that this might be a troublesome issue. As you might racall, Parmenides retorts: "That is because you are still young, Socrates, and philosophy has not yet taken hold of you so firmly as I believe it will someday. You will not despise any of these objects then…."[228] I am convinced that this passage confirms the fact that Plato understood quite well the kind of oneness Parmenides is articulating in his *Poem*.

In order that we too might better understand this complex simplicity or simple complexity of the one, let's move to the third part of this chapter.

Difference within Oneness

In the previous sections we established that at a certain moment—a historical point in time, but also, as I suggested, a necessary moment for any philosophical act—*mythos* and *logos* stand in a harmonious relationship of non-opposition and mutual enhancement. This is the moment of intuition. We also elucidated that the first thought that philosophy intuits is that of the simplicity of the *is*, or of the one. Presently we have to take an even closer and more attentive look at this oneness in developing its intuition into a thought. That is, in order to understand an intuition we end up letting go of it, and so, are bound to abandon this more immediate way of grasping the *is*. This happens already in the Way of Truth when the goddess allows for the multiplicity of the names by letting us, the mortals, name the *is* however we like—to name it everything. Thereby, the mortal act of creation or fabrication is included into the simplicity of being. We began understanding that the axiom "All Is One" expresses the oneness of the *is* and the appearances, the being together of truth and the opinions. Let's engage more fully with the relationship between what seems to be two fundamentally different kinds of being. In this section I will focus my analysis on the passage that was already discussed in relation to the ceremony of naming. Now, however, I will consider another aspect of this passage, namely the claim it makes regarding the relationship between being and thinking. The kind of oneness that holds between these two is identical in structure to the oneness of being and the appearances insofar as this oneness enables and nurtures the

[228] Plato, *Parmenides*, 130 d-e. Tr. by F. M. Cornford in *The Collected dialogues of Plato*. Ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. New York: Pantheon Books, 1966.

difference between them. As Heidegger notes, "Appearing does not mean something derivative…. Being essentially unfolds *as* appearing."[229]

Fragment 8 is the goddess' μῦθος of the route of the *is*, along which there are σήματα, signposts or pathmarks.[230] Manchester argues that there are four such signposts, and that consequently the text of this fragment lends itself to a division into five segments: the first one being the preview of what is to follow, and each one of the others discussing a separate pathmark. If we closely consider the arguments of these four pathmarks we will notice a movement from the simplicity of the *is* through the monogeneric, untrembling, and not unfinished whole to the coherent one which *resembles* "the bulk of a sphere."[231] Manchester notices that the development that takes place along the way from Pathmark 2 to Pathmark 4 is "a transition from a 'here' that is simply Whole, to a 'here and there' that is expansively and palpably One, 'analogue to the bulk of a sphere'…"[232] If in Pathmark 2 the whole is characterized as being "here," and the goddess repeats the word "here" three times without mentioning any "there," in Pathmark 4 we find "well-rounded resemblent to the bulk of a sphere" with the requirement that "there not be something greater or something smaller *here* or *there*,"[233] that is, in Pathmark 4 we find extension. So, in the course of the Way of Truth we move from the simplicity to the complexity, from being to being with the appearances, i.e. to the world in which we, the mortals, live. It is only logical that once we have this world we proceed with the discussion of its best possible configuration or of the most appealing arrangement of its appearances, and this discussion—the Way of Doxa—will be necessarily historically and geographically limited. That is, even the goddess is required or restrained by the appearances to speak in such a way that her words are subject to change, are dependent on the scientific or cultural circumstances of her utterance.

The precise moment of such complication occurs in Pathmark 3 in the passage that articulates the relationship between being and thinking. It is at this point in the goddess' *mytho-logos* that we encounter the extended formulation of Fragment 3, a mention of χρόνος[234] in line 9, as well as the ceremony of naming discussed earlier. So, it is by passing through the elaboration of this third pathmark, and especially through the enigma of the relationship between being and thinking, that we move from the simplicity of the *is* to the complex oneness of the world, and thus, to the understanding of the role that the opinions and the appearances play in relation to being. Let's look more closely then at the goddess' articulation of this relationship.

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[229] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 107.

[230] Cf. footnote 209 above.

[231] B8, 43.

[232] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 123.

[233] B8, 45, emphasis added.

[234] Originally suppressed by H. Diels in the 1903 and ff. editions of *Die Fragmente der Vorsokrater*, until it was defended by Manchester in his article "Parmenides and the Need of Eternity" (*The Monist*, 62, 1979, pp. 81-106). Manchester since corrected several aspects of the argument of this essay in Chapter 4 of *The Syntax of Time*.

As Manchester convincingly argues, the both famous and infamous Fragment 3 "For the same is to think as well as to be" should be recognized as a continuation of Fragment 2, since it fits perfectly its last line: fits both formally, or insofar as the hexameter is concerned, and in relation to the meaning of the passage. As you recall, the first line of Fragment 2 reads: "What I will tell you is which roads of inquiry, and which roads alone, exist for thinking." Now we can add the reason why the goddess discusses the roads in this way, i.e. by asserting the *is* and expressing the impossibility of the is not: τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ ε ναι, "For the same is to think as well as to be."[235] The phrase "τε καὶ" of this fragment suggests that the relationship between the two terms is *not* that of identity—the doubling of "and" complicates it, so to speak. τὸ αὐτὸ or "the same" then, carries some other meaning. I agree with Manchester that this statement is "too ambiguous to do more than awaken expectations."[236] Thus, we ought to look at Pathmark 3 if we want to understand what kind of oneness between thinking and being is at stake for Parmenides. It is here that thinking and being are "shown to be reciprocally involved in one another, to belong together intrinsically, making up a far more complex unity than suggested in Fragment 3."[237]

First, however, let us specify what Parmenides means by "thinking." It is absolutely clear that νοεῖν is not restricted to a rational or intellectual process. Instead it includes intuition, feelings, perceptions, beliefs and desires.[238] Let me clarify, however, the difference between thinking and intuition. Intuition is an aspect of thinking, and consequently, thinking is much more than intuition. However, since intuition is the first moment of thinking, or the birthplace of thinking—after all, intuition is the beginning of philosophy—it already contains in itself the whole of thinking. Here lies a paradox: thinking is much more than intuition, and yet, intuition already contains the entirety of thinking. Like a bud of a flower already contains in itself a very specific flower, yet, for one reason or another, it might not blossom. So, intuition is potentially thinking, and thinking is intuition actualized. Thinking, thus, is intuition developed or comprehended through the act of naming or articulation, where rational explanations are only one of the ways to name.[239] In particular, philosophical thinking as it developed in the West is an

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[235] Translation of this line is Peter Manchester's, and is taken from *The Poem of Parmenides*, PHI 600 Study Edition.

[236] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 131.

[237] *Ibid*.

[238] In this sense Parmenides' and Descartes's notions of thinking coincide—the point that I will take up in the third chapter.
Manchester suggests that the "full sense of νόησις is active intuitive immediacy, intellectual perception, pure reflective consciousness" (*The Syntax of Time*, p. 132). But the term "intellectual perception" might be misleading in this context because intellectual activity is merely one aspect of thinking. However, the coupling together of the intellect and the senses in this one expression does suggest that the senses are not unintelligent, i.e. that the two "faculties" are one in νόησις. Since in my work I have been using the notion of intuition for a very specific purpose, calling thinking "intuitive immediacy" or "pure intuitive apprehension" (as Manchester sometimes does in his lectures) might also be rather confusing.

[239] Others might include mythical accounts, paintings, dance, music, etc. The last two probably remain closest to the moment of intuition.

articulation, in which the discursive or logical aspect dominates. Yet, even Western thought at its extreme—for instance, analytic philosophy—is still merely an elaboration of intuitively grasped enigmas.

It is important to note that the kind of thinking with which we are concerned here is not a psychological state of a particular human being. It is not a subjective experience that reflects the specificities of a this or that situation of thinking, i.e. a historical period, social and political circumstances, or age, gender, race, class, ethnicity, etc. of the thinker. Yet, at the same time, these circumstances are important insofar as they constitute the possibility for thinking, or the place for thinking. However, thinking itself is an activity that occurs in the interval between these specificities of the mortal, and so, here I would like to note that in this passage Parmenides is concerned with the thinkability of being as opposed to the thought process of a particular thinker.[240]

So, keeping in mind the distinction between intuition and thinking we can say that Fragment 3 is an intuition which is then (philosophically) *thought out* in Fragment 8.[241]

> These are the same: thinking, and that on account of which
> There is content of thinking.[242]
>
> ταὐτὸν δ᾽ ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὕνεκέν ἐστι νόημα·

This is an unfolding of Fragment 3, or, as Manchester points out, a restatement of it from the side of thinking, and immediately following is another restatement, only now from the side of being:

> For not without being, in which it has been said,
> will you find thinking,[243]
>
> οὐ γὰρ ἄνευ τοῦ ἐόντος, ἐν ὧι πεφατισμένον ἐστίν,
> εὑρήσεις τὸ νοεῖν·

Since thinking is different from being the goddess looks at their relationship from the two sides, using the two different approaches or articulations of their oneness. One of the reasons for this is that the one of thinking and being is dynamic and active. The perfect tense of φημί in "has been said" or πεφατισμένον in the above quotation does not denote something that is done once and for all (for which the Aorist tense would have been used), but rather reflects the "always already" aspect of this saying of thinking. Such "always already," however, imparts no conclusiveness as to the results of thinking.

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[240] Regarding the numerous misconceptions that arise out of treating thinking as a subjective activity see pp. 145-146 in Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics*.

[241] Even though, as I just pointed out, thinking is a much more inclusive, although not therefore less precise notion than we ordinarily suppose, in this work I will be primarily focusing on the philosophical thinking, as opposed to the other ways of articulating intuition.

[242] B8, 34-36. Translation by Peter Manchester, adjusted by me (*The Syntax of Time*, p. 132).

[243] Translation by Manchester, adjusted by me (*ibid*.).

Rather, the oneness of thinking and being in the sense that thinking has been uttered in being is what allows as well as makes it necessary for us to utter in being yet again and again. Besides, there is no contradiction involved in maintaining that the one is dynamic, since there is a vast difference between activity and hesitation, and though the one is clearly untrembling it can also be active in the sense of being homeostatic.[244] So, this oneness is a movement, and yet not a product of a movement. This is why the oneness of being and thinking does not reduce or collapse their difference.

Here is one way to understand such difference: Thinking is uttered in being, and thus, every time there is thinking there must also be being. However this claim is not reversible, and that is why there is no complete identity between the two. That is, we cannot speak of being apart from thinking, or vise versa. Yet, the difference consists in the following: when there is thinking there is always being, but when there is being there is *content* for thinking, but not necessarily thinking. In other words, being is thinkable but in order for it to be thinking there needs to be also a place in which this thinking happens, or there needs to be an activity or an engagement of a thinker. And this condition is not always satisfied, for there might occur an intuition of being, which never develops itself into thinking. Here becomes apparent the reciprocity of thinking and being, which is neither identity, nor radical difference or opposition, a standing apart. Thinking and being are not radically different or incommensurable just as there is no identity between them.

Here is another way to think their oneness with difference: if thinking is the same as being, but only insofar as being is thinkable, i.e. only insofar as being is that, on account of which there is thought, and if thinking is said *in* being, then it might seem to us that some unthinkable remainder of being is thereby suggested. If so, then we would be confronted with a radical difference between the two, and thus also with such consequences as skepticism and nihilism. Yet, the sameness of thinking and being asserted by the goddess precludes the possibility of there being such remainder. In other words, the way in which it is formulated in the *Poem*, the goddess seems to be suggesting that there both is and is not some unthought remainder of being, that there both is and is not the difference between thinking and being. Yet, as we now know such hesitation between the *is* and the *is not* turns out to be an indication of the mortal hesitation, and the circular path of our own fabrications. Precisely because we are two-headed, we tend to interpret this relationship as either that of identity or of radical difference, and then hesitate between the two. But the "almost" of such sameness does not allow the two to be reduced to an identity, and yet, the difference between them can never be thought as such, i.e. without considering them as belonging together.

Is there a solution to or a way of understanding this enigmatic relationship of being and thinking? We should try to hold in our mind—to remember, as Plato would say—the idea that "uttered in being" indicates an ontological priority of being that is untranslatable into a value judgment about their relationship.

Because of this we might be tempted to conclude that being is prior to thinking, or being is a container for thinking. But we need to be extremely careful at this point, since we cannot think or name such a "remainder," and thus we might be prone to simply assert

[244] I am indebted to Manchester for understanding the different kinds of activity involved in this distinction.

the identity of being and thinking. Yet, neither one of these conclusions is true, since the oneness is an enigma, accessible entirely only intuitively, and never fully articulable.

But even though it is not only difficult, but even impossible to exhaustively articulate this oneness, every philosophical act has to assume that thinking and being are non-identical while not being radically different. For there can be no philosophy as metaphysics without this presupposition, and here, of course, by metaphysics we mean the non-dogmatic, and non-hierarchical originary kind. Jumping ahead we can say that the philosophical approach must begin with such oneness, while the sophistic position attempts to impress the difference between the two by way of commencing with it. Whereas if we are standing—or wavering—on the third path it might *seem* to us that we have to choose between conceiving thinking either as identical or as contrary to being. However, these alternatives are the instances of what the goddess identifies as the *unseemly* opinions.

Ultimately, the complex oneness of being and thinking needs to be constantly re-articulated, since being fully available only through intuition, it tends to be misunderstood in any given interpretation.

The relationship between thinking and being follows the same pattern or has the same structure as the oneness that holds between the *is* and the appearances, or between truth and the opinions. In this work I follow the *Poem* in establishing the relationship between thinking and being as a paradigm of the other two, even thought the oneness of being is ontologically prior to any other, more particular way to look at this one, such as, for instance, through the relationship between truth and the opinions, or being and thinking, or nature and *logos*. Of course, the way in which each being is both the same and different from thinking is other than the relationship of oneness that holds between being and the appearances. In their being together the two are neither identical nor radically different, i.e. neither two nor one of the count, but, paradoxically, or enigmatically one with difference—this is the pattern that crystallizes in all of these relationships. Because we are accustomed to relying on certain rather crude misunderstandings of what thinking is it might turn out to be easier to reveal what exactly is and is not the one by dispelling them through an elucidation of the relationship between thinking and being. In addition, in the text of the *Poem* itself the movement towards greater elaboration of this oneness is clearly visible: the reciprocity between thinking and being announced by the goddess in B2 is much closer to an intuitive truth, whereas in B8 it gets articulated further. But perhaps even more importantly, the one of thinking and being establishes the one of epistemological and metaphysical claims, and thus, enables us to avoid numerous theoretical pitfalls, as well as to further reinforce the main claim of this chapter "All Is One."

It is not surprising then that the belonging together of thinking and being occupies the transitional point of the *Poem*, allowing us to move from the simple to the complex *is*. The goddess' discussion in Pathmark 3 is thus an elaboration of difference within the one, or the dynamic character of oneness: "What has changed is that now we have *moved* from being or entity that is purely intelligible, to what we are *almost* able to call 'an' entity, a single ponderable, extended, and apparently corporeal sphere."[245] Although I entirely agree with the idea expressed in this quotation, the terminology used to

[245] Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, p. 124, emphasis added.

conceptualize the movement that occurs in Pathmark 3 might be misleading. Instead of using notions like "purely intelligible" and "corporeal" I would rather say that in Pathmark 3 we move from the intuition of the *is* to the thinkability of the world, where the world is the *is* that appears. Or else, that we move from the *is* to the one of the *is* and the appearances, the one that coheres within itself with its own difference. So, in Fragment 8 the movement within motionless one is acknowledged: it is the activity or reciprocity of the opinions and the appearances—the homeostatic activity. From the side of the appearances this activity consists in setting the limits for the *is*.

So, in order to further understand the oneness of the *is* and the appearances let's consider the notion of fetters or restraints that figures so prominently in Fragment 8.

The goddess first mentions restraints when she talks about Δίκη, Justice: "neither generation nor perishing would Justice let loose, slackening her fetters [πέδησιν from πέδη], but she holds."[246] In Pathmark 2 the *is* insofar as it is whole is "quiescent in the bonds of great restraints [πείρασι from πέρας],"[247] and not unfinished because "mighty Constraint holds it in the bonds of a restraint [πείρατος] which enfolds it all about."[248] And in Pathmark 3 thinking just like time is said to be *not* "something other outside of being, since Fate [Μοῖρα] has bound-with-fetters [ἐπέδησεν from πεδάω] it whole and quiescent to be."[249]

Throughout B8 the goddess emphasizes that the *is* is held in fetters or restraints—but how are we to understand this? First, we must note that in Parmenides' time the notion of restraints is inextricably connected with that of deception and seduction: to bind somebody meant to trick or even bewitch them by means of casting a spell.[250] Recall Odysseus and his quality of μῆτις —he bound the Cyclops Polyphemus by creating an appearance of truth, i.e. by re-creating or re-articulating his name, and, thus, ultimately, by transforming his own being, or, better, the limits of his being.[251]

The idea that limits or restraints are necessary for being is explored only in B8, whereas being in its simplicity and plainness comes on the scene with the discussion of the two routes for thinking in B2. In other words, by B8 we have an elaboration of being, and so, the necessity of its limit is intimately connected with the role of the appearances: the limits are those of the appearances. Thus, to use a mythological explanation, the *is* is bewitched by the appearances. And in fact, if the *is* were unbound or infinite there would be no way to think it. So, yet again the one of the is and the appearances intersects with that of thinking and being resulting in the convergence of the epistemological and ontological claims in the act of originary metaphysics.

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[246] B8, lines 13-15.

[247] B8, line 26.

[248] B8, lines 30-31.

[249] B8, lines 37-38.

[250] Cf. Kingsley, *Reality*, 291.

[251] Cf. footnote 224 for the discussion of this passage from the Odyssey.

In the following passage from Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics* we find one of the best formulations of this positive sense of the restraint or πέρας:

> But this standing-there, this taking and maintaining a *stand* that stands erected high in itself, is what the Greeks understood as Being. Whatever takes such a stand becomes *constant* in itself and thereby freely and on its own runs up against the necessity of its limit, *peras*. This *peras* is not something that first accrues to a being from outside. Much less is it some deficiency in the sense of a detrimental restriction. Instead, the self-restraining hold that comes from a limit, the having-of-itself wherein the constraint holds itself, is the Being of beings; it is what first makes a being be a being as opposed to a nonbeing. For something to take such a stand therefore means for it to attain its limit, to de-limit itself. Thus a basic characteristic of a being is its *telos*, which does not mean goal or purpose, but end. Here 'end' does not have any negative sense, as if 'end' meant that something can go no further, that it breaks down and gives out. Instead, 'end' means completion in the sense of coming to fulfillment. Limit and end are that whereby beings first begin to be…. Whatever places itself into and thereby enacts its limit, and thus stands, has form, *morphe*.[252]

The limits of the *is* are the result of the oneness of thinking and being that makes the *is* articulable, and thus limited; and the one of being and the appearances makes the *is* show itself or appear as a specific configuration. In other words, this oneness allows the *is* to be cut and re-cut, as Deleuze, following Plato, will say. But the ways in which being is cut or articulated can be more or less effective. Let us look into this issue.

Twice in the *Poem* the goddess mentions the opinions of the mortals, emphasizing how important it is to learn manipulating them successfully. She ends the proem with the following words:

> And what's needed is for you to learn all things: both the unshaken
> heart of persuasive Truth and the opinions of mortals,
> in which there's nothing that can truthfully be trusted at all.
> But even so, this too you will learn—how beliefs based on
> appearance ought to be believable [δοκίμως] as they travel all through
> all there is.

The goddess ends the discussion of the pathmarks and moves to the Way of Doxa by asserting:

> With this, I stop for you the convincing discourse [πιστὸν λόγον] and the thought-
> upon around the truth. Hereupon opinions of mortals learn,
> listening to the disguising cosmos [κόσμον ἀπατηλὸν] of my words….
> So that nobody among the mortals will ever manage in practical judgment
> [γνώμη], to ride past you.

[252] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 63.

The "disguising cosmos" of the goddess' words is the Way of Doxa—the deceptive or illusory realm of mortal opinions. So, the goddess herself embarks on the road of mortal fabrications, or enters into thinking that happens or is situated at the crossroads—the dangerous zone where thieves, tricksters, simpletons, as well as shrewd travelers gather. Today this place is perhaps better known to us as the realm of borderlands, the space of transition, transformation, metamorphosis.[253] The third route, as you recall, is the place where the road seems to split into two: the *is* and the *is not*, where we are supposed to make a decision that has already been made. Having set her foot on this treacherous but also fruitful path, the goddess proceeds to re-order the opinions, making them seemly: she makes beliefs believable, or makes them *be* believably. For even though these beliefs or opinions cannot be trusted, yet there is a need to learn them, and to learn "how they ought to be believable," as Kingsley translates line 32. Manchester translates the same line in the following way: "how beliefs based on appearances needs must appearingly/believably be," thus putting an emphasis on "be" instead of "believable." Insofar as I understand it, Kingsley's translation conveys that the illusory beliefs nevertheless need to be seemly, or need to form a cosmos, that is, be ordered, even if only for a brief moment. The goddess is able to impose an effective order on the opinions because *by now* (recall that time entered her discourse in Pathmark 3) she knows that only the *is* is, since she began from the claim that all is one. Manchester's translation, on the other hand, brings to our attention the fact that the appearances need to *be*, that is, rather than being assigned a hierarchical status within an ontology, they are simply admitted into the *is*. I think that if we look at the larger context, the two ways of translating this excerpt ultimately entail the same thing. For both of these translations presuppose the oneness of the *is* and the appearances, concluding that the appearances are in the same way as the *is*. In addition, both of these translations rely on the distinction that the goddess makes between the two kinds of opinions or the two kinds of appearances: the believable and the unbelievable, or the ordered (just like the goddess' words) and the disordered, or ἄκοσμος. Consider the lines that follow directly upon the above quotation:

> Hereupon opinions of mortals
> learn, listening to the disguising cosmos of my words.
> For they established two forms in their minds for naming,
> of which there is no need to name one [μορφὰς γὰρ κατέθεντο δύο γνώμαις
> ὀνομάζειν, τῶν μίαν οὐ χρεών ἐστιν]—wherein they have
> wandered astray…[254]

From the above passages that connect the three parts of the *Poem*, appearing at the end of the proem and the Way of Truth, we can conclude the following: First, the opinions are deceitful and cannot be trusted in the way in which truth can. Yet, and this is the second point, it is necessary to acquire the quality of μῆτις, or become an expert in

[253] I rely on the concept of the borderlands developed by Gloria Anzaldúa in her book *Borderlands/*La Frontera. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1999.

[254] B8, 54-5 translated by David Gallop from Parmenides of Elea, *Fragments*, p. 75, adjusted by me.

them. Finally, the opinions can be and ought to be believable. So, when in the above quotation the goddess speaks about the two forms of naming, she refers to the believable or seemly and the unseemly opinions. The Greek verb ὀνομάζω is used here—the same verb that the goddess uses in Pathmark 3 of B8 during the ceremony of naming, i.e. when she lets the mortals name the *is* whatever they like. So, the mortals name the *is*, but along with the possibility of making their creations believable, or making them converge with truth and be persuasive, we can also create the unseemly opinions—the fact that, after all, reflects our mortality or finitude.

Yet, and this is a key point, however implausible it might appear, the unseemly opinions are by no means excluded from the oneness of being. It is this realization that makes Gadamer argue that "[a]ccording to the conventional interpretation, the text asserts here that one of the two forms or designations of reality is incorrect. That, however, distorts Greek usage…. this 'one' is not 'one of two', but rather the unity of the thing that is the true unity behind the two different kinds."[255] In a moment we will confront the misinterpretation Gadamer mentions. What makes the above observation so profound is the fact that even though there are (significant) differences between the opinions and truth, as well as among the opinions themselves, they are ultimately one.

In the Sophist chapter I will discuss the criterion for distinguishing between the seemly and the unseemly opinions. At the present let me just point out that the one of all the mortal namings echoes back to the only one way for thinking—that of the is.

As I pointed out before, the opinions or the appearances are usually conceived in opposition to truth and being. They are either burdened by the weight of being deceiving, and thus are required to be overcome (the attitude characteristic of the Enlightenment), or the situation is entirely reversed, and truth and being are found infinitely suspicious—the approach that much of the twentieth century philosophy adopts. However, as I have been arguing, even though the two sets of notions are distinct they are not opposed: just as the logic of oppositions is quite inappropriate when applied to the *is* and the *is not*, in this case too we need to prevent ourselves from giving into the habit of thinking in terms of opposition. As I have been suggesting in this exploration of the *Poem*, vilification or depreciation of neither truth nor the opinions is fruitful, or yields an accurate understanding of the world. Instead, both should be recognized as equally valuable, albeit in very different ways. Consequently, the notions of fabrication, seduction, and deception will also shed all their negative undertones. Indeed, the goddess continuously reminds us of the constructive or creative power of fabrication and seduction.

Not only Parmenides, but Plato too recognizes the fertility of the appearances. The Greek word ἀπατηλὸν used in line 52 of Fragment 8, and translated either as "disguising" or "deceptive" cosmos of goddess' words appears in a very interesting context in Plato's *Gorgias*. There Socrates talks about the person who spends a lot of effort on the beautification of his body, so that it looks healthy, as opposed to actually making it healthy through exercise. [256] We can imagine somebody who buys gym clothes that make him look more athletic than he actually is. Undoubtedly, this is an instance of deception: wearing the clothes he *seems* more athletic than he actually is. That is, he

[255] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, p. 101.

[256] Plato, *Gorgias*, 465b.

appears to be somebody he is not, and so, we might be even tempted to conclude that he is somehow entangled with non-being, thereby not heeding to the goddess' warning. This is the danger of the appearances. But here is another way to look at the situation: the clothes *might* incite him to *become* athletic, to be healthy, or, perhaps, they might do this to me. In other words, the deceitful appearances *might* allow us, the twin headed mortals, to re-create the world. But, of course, there is no guarantee, and there is a very real danger of positing non-being.

This world of the appearances *is*, i.e. it is not separate from the *is* but is the harmony of the homeostatic movement of being and of our more or less sporadic motions—the mortal fabrication. The words of the goddess are deceptive precisely because she articulates the oneness or creates an expedient—even if very effective—arrangement of the appearances. That is, in order to be able to communicate with us, the mortals, the goddess needs to engage herself with finitude and deception.[257]

Enigmas too, after all, are ἀπατηλὸν or deceptive: a sentence or a dialogue is not exactly what it is, thus it emphasizes or reveals our tendency to be misled, our propensity towards producing the unseemly arrangements of the world. Such deceptiveness—raised to the "nth" power—is precisely what affirms our mortality.

So, what *is* is held by the restraints of the appearances, and this arrangement is our world—the world in which we are able to create. Our creation is what makes this world itself—the deceptive world. So, what is truly remarkable about Parmenides' *Poem* is that it presents us with a non-hierarchical ontology: just as at the beginning of B8, so too at its end there is only one level of reality, one kind of being, albeit always the one with difference. Because the *is* is not distinct from the appearances or the opinions, in all of the parts of the *Poem* we are discussing the same world.

This means that the twin-headed mortals in their indecision, as well as in all of the fabrications that result from this indecision, are also included in the one of being. Moreover, their/our faltering namings bewitch and limit the nameless *is* into the vibrant world of changing colors.[258] As we have seen, through the act of naming in Pathmark 3 of Fragment 8 the goddess reveals the oneness of the *is* and the appearances, the oneness of truth and the opinions of mortals, although this complex oneness already comes to the fore in the relationship between the first and the third roads.

Recalling the discussion of the circular, or, better, spherical symbolism of the *Poem*, let us consider a passage at the end of B8 in light of the what we now know about oneness: "Moreover, since there is a final bond [πεῖρας], it has been completed in every direction well-rounded resemblent [ἐναλίγκιος] to the bulk of a sphere from the center equipoised every which way."[259] Now we are in a much better position to understand this passage. The spherical form is an image that best reveals the structure of the one

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[257] As we know, the Greek gods cannot let themselves be seen as they are by the mortals, because we will not be able to endure the sight, and will perish. Thus limited by the mortals, the gods have to take on different appearances. For one of such instances recall how Athena appears to Telemachus in the Odyssey. Cf. Jean-Pierre Vernant. "Mortals and Immortals: The Body of the Divine." *Mortals and Immortals*. Ed. Froma I. Zeitlin. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991, pp. 27-50.

[258] B8, 41.

[259] B8, 42-44. Translated by Manchester. Cf. Appendix 2 to *The Syntax of Time*.

discussed in the *Poem*, yet this image too is an appearance, that is why it is mentioned by the goddess only after the discussion of the third pathmark in B8. Manchester points out that this image indicates the development or the movement that occurs in B8—the movement from purely intuitive to the articulated, and thus necessarily extended or corporeal entity. [260] This image draws our attention to the myriad of connections that hold between beings, the connections that make this world re-arrangeable or fluid and thus deceptive.

Having discussed the main ideas of the *Poem* we are in the position to confront the source of the many misunderstandings that proliferate in the scholarly tradition. Even though earlier in the chapter I approached several common misinterpretations of Parmenides, only now does it become possible to show their insubstantiality.

Analyzing Fragment 12 and Aetius' commentary on it, [261] Kirk and Raven see a contradiction in the way Justice or Necessity is here described as the "cause of movement and becoming." They end up concluding that the "two parts" of the *Poem* are simply "irreconcilable" (where by the "two parts" they mean the Way of Truth and the Way of Doxa). Without the slightest hesitation they add that we "should not waste time in the hopeless attempt to reconcile the two parts."[262] First of all, we cannot help noticing that the proem has been dismissed as a legitimate part of the *Poem*—after all it is a mere "allegorical introduction."[263] Here once again the influence that Aristotle's assertions exerted on the interpretive tradition becomes evident. After all, Aristotle declares that poetry ought to be straightforward, and not complicated with enigmas and allegories,[264] making the proem far from satisfactory in scholarly eyes. As a result, the commentators more often than not dismiss the first fragment. Similarly, they establish an unbreachable rift between the two remaining parts, the rift that on the ontological level translates into the distinction between truth and the opinions, being and the appearances. In other words, they make a move that contradicts the core of Parmenides' claim, and as a result, are bound to draw a conclusion just like that of Kirk and Raven in relation to Fragment 16 of the Way of Opinion: "It is noteworthy in the first place how completely Parmenides must…have suppressed his real convictions: the equation of perception and thought comes strangely from the author of the Way of Truth."[265] Mind you, that this is said in relation to the following:

> For as each has a union of the much-wandering limbs,
> so is mind [νόος] present to humans; for it is the same

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[260] Cf. Manchester, *The Syntax of Time*, esp. p. 124.

[261] G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (1963), p. 284.

[262] *Ibid*., p. 284-285.

[263] *Ibid*., p. 266.

[264] Cf. Struck, Peter T. *Birth of the Symbol*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 23-24 and ff.

[265] G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (1963), p. 283.

> which the nature of the limbs thinks [φρονέει]
> both in each and every human; for the full [πλέον] is thought [νόημα].[266]

As became clear in the course of our analysis, thinking is not a merely intellectual activity, and our bodies, just like the other appearances, are included into being. And since this passage is quite consistent with the rest of the *Poem*, there is no reason to see Parmenides as somebody who "suppresses his real convictions" for no apparent reason.

Seeing the second and the third parts of the *Poem* as being radically different has lead also to the following conclusion: "just as in the Way of Truth the objects of sense have been altogether excluded, so also, as we shall see, the Way of Seeming [or Opinion] will exclude altogether the objects of reason."[267] Apart from attributing to Parmenides the much later concept of reason, such an interpretation is oblivious to the interdependence of the senses and (what we would call) rationality throughout the *Poem*. Insensible to the much broader notion of thinking with which Parmenides operates, Kirk and Raven maintain that

> starting from the premise ἔστι, 'it is'… Parmenides proceeds, by the sole use of reason unaided by the senses, to deduce all that can be known about Being, and he ends up by denying any truthful validity to the senses or nay reality to what they appear to perceive. Then in the 'Way of Seeming', unexpectedly reinstating the world of appearances that he has so vehemently demolished, he appends what seems, from the relatively scanty fragments that survive, to have been a cosmogony of the traditional type.[268]

In assuming an unbreachable rift between the senses and *logos*, between the third and the second parts of the *Poem*, the commentators follow Aristotle's distinction between λόγος and αἴσθησις (sense, perception). In *Metaphysics*, book Alpha Aristotle writes: "None of those, then, who pronounce everything to be a unity, succeeded in locating an efficient cause, except perhaps Parmenides—and he only inasmuch as he posits that there is not only one, but somehow two factors in question."[269] What these two factors are becomes clearer a little later in *Metaphysics*:

> Parmenides, however, seems to reason here and there more critically; for when he insists that there is no nonbeing in competition with being, he must believe that there is only being, and nothing else…. But when he is forced by factual evidence [ἀναγκαζόμενος δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τοῖς φαινομένοις] to take up the one as applying to discourse and the more/many as applying to sense [τὸ ἕν μέν κατὰ τὸν λόγον πλείω δέ κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν] he, too, assumes two kinds of factors and

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[266] Tr. David Gallop from Parmenides of Elea, *Fragments*, p. 87, adjusted by me.

[267] G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (1963), p. 279.

[268] *Ibid*., p. 266.

[269] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 984b1.

> two beginnings, which he calls the hot and the cold, such as fire and earth; and of these he ranges the hot with being, and the cold with nonbeing.[270]

In other words, Aristotle attributes to Parmenides two completely distinct and thus irreconcilable acts of thinking: when Parmenides thinks in the mode of *logos* he only admits the one, but when the senses are involved Parmenides acknowledges the two—bright light and dark heavy night (B8, 55-59 and B9). By admitting the two, of course, Parmenides necessarily opens the flood gates to the many.[271]

Thomas Aquinas, one of the best commentators on Aristotle, clarifies this above passage:

> But even though Parmenides was compelled by this argument [that there is nothing besides being] to hold that all things are one, yet, because there appeared to the senses to be many things in reality, and because he was compelled to accept what appeared to the senses, it was his aim to make his position to conform to both of these, i.e., to what is apprehended both by senses and by reason…. Hence he posited two causes, namely, the hot and the cold, one of which he ascribed to fire, and the other to earth…. And lest his position seem to contradict the conclusion of his own argument that whatever is besides being is nothing, he said that one of these causes—the hot—is being, and that the other cause—the one besides being, or the cold—is non-being, according to both reason and the truth of the thing itself, and is a being only according to sensory perception.
> Now in this matter he comes very close to the truth; for the material principle, which he held to be earth, is not an actual being. And in a similar way, too, one of two contraries is a privation, as is said in Book I of the *Physics*. But privation does not belong to the intelligible constitution of being. Hence in a sense cold is the privation of heat, and thus is non-being.[272]

It is evident from the above discussion that Aristotle is forcing his predecessors onto a Procrustean bed: he often measures them against his own philosophical questions, not taking into account the problems to which they are responding. Hence Aristotle's dismissal of Heraclitus as having only one "cause"—fire—and not four, as every sensible human being should. Under such a framework Parmenides is much better off; he, at least, has two causes. Such an interpretation of Parmenides' thought, however flattering it might appear, turns Parmenides into nothing other than a twin-headed mortal (as opposed to treating him as a philosopher). For this pre-Socratic philosopher is presented as trying to hold on to both the one and the many without realizing that he does it by positing non-being, as Thomas Aquinas notes. Thomas Aquinas is quick to remark that this non-being is nothing other than privation, i.e. does not belong to the intelligible

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[270] *Ibid*., 986b10, translation adjusted by me.

[271] The Visitor of Plato's *Sophist*, as we will shortly see, follows the same logic: he only needs to prove that there are two in order to show that there are many.

[272] Thomas Aquinas. *Commentary on the* Metaphysics *of Aristotle*. Vol. 1. Tr. John P. Rowan. Chicago: Henry Gegnery Company, 1961, p. 60.

constitution of being. This move, although trying to salvage such a position from contradictions, reinforces the radical rift between the intelligible and the sensory—the rift that is nowhere to be found in the *Poem*.

Yet, Aristotle is correct in pointing out that understanding the world requires more than reason—after all, *logos* around Aristotle's time does acquire this meaning—and so, Parmenides indeed is "compelled to accept what appeared to the senses," as Thomas Aquinas puts it. Yet, Parmenides does this by including the light and the night, the hot and the cold into the one. After all, B9 says: "All is full of light and obscure night together, of both equally" since only the *is* is.[273]

Gadamer too notes that many contemporary critics of Parmenides behave "just as naively"[274] as Aristotle who thinks that since Parmenides wants to claim the oneness of being he denies "motion and becoming, yet later he gives in under the pressure of experiential truth and describes the universe in its multiplicity and in its becoming."[275] Gadamer calls such an approach absurd and instead maintains that

> we are faced here with a speculative problem having to do with the inseparability of the truth of logical thought from experience…. It seems to me that the basis of this thematic lies in these Parmenidean lines, where we find the inseparability of the one truth from the multiplicity of opinions formulated in the mouth of the goddess.[276]

But let us look further at the ways in which the *Poem* was supposed to assert the radical difference between *logos* and the senses. As we have already witnessed, Guthrie's interpretation of Parmenides is a mixture of extremely valuable insights and complete blunders. Here is what he asserts regarding the role of the senses: "the first part of the poem [the Way of Truth] deduces the nature of reality from premises asserted to be wholly true, and leads among other things to the conclusion that *the world as perceived by the senses is unreal*."[277] Guthrie justifies this claim later in his book while treating Fragment B7: "What she [the goddess] is in fact enjoining on him [Parmenides] appears in the next lines: it is *not to trust the senses*, but instead to *judge by reason*. Here for the first time sense and reason are contrasted…. It is a decisive moment in the history of European philosophy, which can never be the same again."[278] As I already pointed out, translating *logos* with "reason" is anachronistic. And even Dilcher's suggestion that instead of "decide by reason" κρῖναι λόγωι of this fragment should be rendered as

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[273] Translation by David Gallop from Parmenides of Elea, *Fragments*, p.77, adjusted by me.

[274] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, p. 99.

[275] *Ibid*.

[276] *Ibid*., p. 99-100.

[277] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 4, emphasis added.

[278] *Ibid*., p. 25.

"decide by reasoning" is questionable. [279] At least until we get absolutely clear that "reasoning" is inclusive of all the different kinds of thinking.

But why does the goddess tell Parmenides not to trust the senses? Is she really setting an opposition between the senses and *logos* here? Let's look closely at the passage.

> B7[280]
> For never shall this prevail: that things that are not are.
> From this path of inquiry hold your mind away.
> And don't let much-experienced habit force you to
> guide your sightless eye and echoing ear and
> tongue along this way, but judge in favor of the
> highly contentious demonstration of the truth
> contained in these words as spoken by me
> [κρῖναι δὲ λόγωι πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα].

In this rendition κρῖναι λόγωι is translated as judge in favor of the words, taking *logos* to be referring to the words spoken by the goddess. But even if we keep Dilcher's "reasoning" we still see that it is the goddess' reasoning which is at stake in the passage. So, if carefully considered, the fragment does indeed introduce a distinction, but it is a distinction between the two ways of inquiry or knowing: the mortal and the one befitting the goddess, or, as we will shortly see, the philosophical. In other words, in B7 the opposition is set up between thinking as an always new happening and habitual actions, in which no thinking occurs because our senses are somehow malfunctioning—the eye turns out to be sightless and the ear echoing. That is, in following a habit, or in performing some "automatic" action we do not actually see or hear. Thus, in this fragment there is nothing about trusting or mistrusting the senses generally, but rather, it is concerned with the instances of simple repetition—repetition without difference, that is—when we stop thinking and confine ourselves exclusively to the uncreative mortal existence.

So, Aristotle is correct when he claims that Parmenides recognizes the importance of the senses, but mistaken when he supposes that we need to distinguish between two irreconcilable conclusions that Parmenides reached, or, as Thomas Aquinas suggests, separate intellectual explanations from the ones based on the senses. As we have seen, there is no radical break between the senses and *logos* in Parmenides—the kind of break that exposes a radical inconsistency in his thought. Quite a few scholars, having thus misunderstood Parmenides, had to use much ingenuity to explain away such an illogical move coming from the father of Western logic. Guthrie, for instance, lists several possible justifications for why Parmenides should "take the trouble to narrate a detailed cosmogony [in the third part of the *Poem*] when he has already proved that opposites cannot exist and there can be no cosmogony because plurality and change are

[279] Cf. Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, p. 35.

[280] The first line of B7 does not appear in Kingsley's *Reality*, and I add it the way it has been translated by David Gallop in Parmenides of Elea, *Fragments*, p. 63.

inadmissible conceptions"[281] However, as we have seen, there is abundant evidence in favor of the structural unity of the *Poem*: the goddess insists that both the opinions and truth are necessary, that the name of the is "shall be everything,"[282] as well as points out that the *is* needs to be limited. All of this precludes us from seeing the third part of Parmenides' work as problematic. Far from being inadmissible, plurality and change *are*. Guthrie himself approximates this realization, when, personifying Parmenides, he responds to the problem of the seeming inconsistency of the third part: "Being ourselves mortals we must come to terms with this deceitful show, and I can at least help you to understand it better than the other people."[283] Indeed, as will become evident in the following chapter, we are mortals, and so, always already a part of the "deceitful show." Let us remember, however, that "deceitful" need not carry any negative connotations, but, in fact, is absolutely indispensable for the *is*.

Another consequence of the same misunderstanding of positing a radical break between *logos* and the senses is to see Parmenides as a cosmologist and to reduce his metaphysical claims to pre-scientific explanations of the physical phenomena. Cornford, for example, does just that when he writes:

> Parmenides' premise states in a more abstract form the first assumption common to all his predecessors, Milesian or Pythagorean: ultimately there exists a One Being. …this One Being is not a mere abstraction; it proves to be a single continuous and homogeneous *substance filling the whole of space*.[284]

As we have seen, the purpose of the *Poem* is quite different, although, of course, it does not devalue or exclude the mortal concerns, one of which is to account for the arrangement of the appearances, which in Parmenides' situation required cosmological considerations, whereas in our own it would call for the scientific ones. Yet, it is a clear mistake to treat Parmenides' one as referring to a physical entity, some substance *filling* space, as if space were somehow outside of or other than being or the one. After all, being is an inside without an outside.[285]

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[281] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 5, emphasis added.

[282] B8, 38.

[283] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 5-6.

[284] Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, p. 29, emphasis added.

[285] I borrow this formulation from Manchester, cf. *The Syntax of Time*, p. 112. The context of this statement is well worth quoting, since it confirms—albeit using slightly different terminology—many of the ideas that I have been developing in this chapter: "the fundamental choice presented at the beginning of the *Way of Truth* is entirely a matter of intuitive conviction, not the fruit of argument and hence not a choice at all…. In Fragment 2 it is impossible to justify, strictly speaking, counting two paths with regard to "what is for thinking" (εἰσι νοῆσαι, line 2), namely being in its truth. Being is an inside without outside, a one-sided fact. It does not distinguish itself from some opposite, supposedly non-being. It is encountered in its self-authenticating nature in a contemplative intuition that may perfectly well be rooted in the traditions of spiritual practice to which Parmenides subscribed. Nevertheless, he was able to explore this intuition [in Fragment 8]. "

Conclusion

In this section with the help of Parmenides' *Poem* we articulated the first axiom of originary metaphysics: all is one. Granted, this is only one way of thinking out the oneness of everything, but, hopefully, it will prove to be a seemly one.

Parmenides' *Poem*, standing at the historical point of philosophy's inception, represents the beginning of any philosophizing. In particular, it shows to us that a philosophical act has intuition as its first moment—the intuition of the oneness of what is. In the case of Parmenides this intuitive experience emerges as a result of shamanic practices, as the proem indicates. Thus, this intuition is first presented in the *Poem* as an enigma contrived by Persephone—an enigma inciting us to further thinking.[286] Only later, in B8, is it developed or articulated more thoroughly, whereby revealing the complexity of the one.

Having begun with the same intuition, we too were able to explore in this chapter the complex oneness that holds between truth and the opinions, between the *is* and the appearances. We were able to discern in what way the one is non-identical, that is, the one with difference. In other words, we witnessed the fact that the *is* is the *is* and the appearances, or that the first path is the first and the third path. In doing so, we came to realize that the mortal fabrications are just as valuable and necessary as being. Thus we confirmed the non-hierarchical ontology of imminent transcendence. We also realized that the second path, even though it is not for thinking, needs to be acknowledged, i.e. we need to be mindful of it in order to avoid confusion.[287]

We also followed the goddess in elucidating the structure or pattern of the one by articulating the relationship that holds between being and thinking, in which there both is and is not a gap between the two or an unthinkable remainder of being. In a similar way, being is not the sum of all the appearances, and yet not something that transcends them, or is radically other than them.

In the *Poem* Parmenides makes an often misconceived move that will also be made by Descartes (and also misunderstood by many of Descartes's commentators): Following up on the discussion of the number of the routes that exist for thinking, Parmenides claims that there are two ways of approaching the world, neither of which excludes either rationality, or the senses. One of the ways is a philosophical way—what the goddess calls "the *is*," and what Descartes will call it "the mind"—and another is a scientific or mortal way, called by Descartes "the body."

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[286] B2.

[287] Even though in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* Heidegger appears to be advancing a positive notion of nothing, i.e. he seems to affirm non-being, and thus is at odds with Parmenides on this point, he acknowledges that Parmenides does justice to the second path, insofar as he recognizes it (cf. p. 117).

That is why in any *philosophical* act we need to begin with the presupposition of oneness, although we need to keep in mind that it is always complex or dynamic oneness. To draw on an example from yet another historical period, Plotinus in his famous passage in the Book III of the *Enneads* tells us that Time came down from Eternity, and in order to be able to give an account of Time and its relationship with Eternity we also need to come down with Time. That is, if we are to begin philosophically, we need to begin from the point of oneness, just like Time did. Indeed, it is impossible to begin with difference, and not end up at a dead end, as we will see in the next chapter; unless, of course, this move is intended to be a purely preparatory one, i.e. designed to clear the place for thinking. For we can only understand the role of difference, if we already know—albeit only intuitively—that all is one. We can only understand, and thus come to value the appearances, if we begin our thinking with the *is*.

So, originary metaphysics always begins with the intuition that all is one. But the crucial point, of course, is to be able to properly conceive this oneness, or to create a seemly articulation of it. And regardless of whether Aristotle understood the kind of one that "things constitute," Western philosophy has tended to misunderstand it—the tendency that in the twentieth century resolved itself into the proclamation of the end of metaphysics.

Chapter 2

The Philosopher and Plato's *Sophist*

In the previous chapter I explored the moment in which a philosophical act begins, the moment of intuition. With the help of the *Poem* of Parmenides I argued that philosophy as a thinking that thinks being (or as thinking-being) has its inception in what is not reducible to rational or logical thought, but also includes beliefs, feelings, desires, bodily sensations, perceptions, and movements. The question that arises then, is who is doing such thinking or where does such thinking happen? In this chapter I will elaborate an answer to this question by exploring what I will call the place of philosophy, or the philosopher. I will argue that the philosopher is the aspect of the human being that engages with the *is*, the aspect that in order to be effective needs to accept her other, i.e. the sophist.[288] First, though, I will explore the idea that the philosopher and the sophist cannot be distinguished at the level of the appearances, since at this level only their deeds are visible. Next, I will develop the definitions of the philosopher and the sophist insofar as being or the *is* is concerned. Finally, I will explore the reasons for why the philosopher needs the sophist. Plato's dialogue the *Sophist* will serve as an entryway into my discussion of this chapter. However, I will also draw on several other dialogues by Plato, including *Republic* and *Meno*. I choose to focus on Plato's writings not only because he is the first one in the history of Western philosophy to explicitly raise the question of who the philosopher and the sophist are, and not primarily because in his *Sophist* he is responding to the *Poem* of Parmenides, with which I engage in the first chapter of this work. I am particularly interested in Plato's work because in many of his dialogues, but especially in the *Sophist*, Plato creates a space for our own act of philosophizing. In other words, Plato's text is a seamless example of a sophistical trick that is designed to confuse in order to encourage philosophical thinking. Since in this chapter I will be focusing on the indispensability of such tricks for the act of philosophizing, Plato's text fits perfectly with my analysis.

As you might recall, at the beginning of the *Sophist* Socrates asks the Eleatic Visitor to speak about the philosopher, the sophist, and the statesman. The Visitor consents, and through the method of division first finds the definition of the sophist, and then, in another dialogue, *Statesman*, that of the statesman, we have no record of a dialogue in which Plato in a similar fashion discusses the definition of the philosopher. Why?

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[288] In order to make my writing more fluid henceforth I will be referring to the philosopher by using the feminine pronoun and to the sophist by using the masculine, although, of course, both pronouns apply to either one of these aspects. I will also alternate between the feminine and the masculine pronoun when referring to the mortal aspect.

The answer to this puzzle that I will develop in this chapter is the following: it is impossible to come up with the same kind of a definition for the philosopher that the Visitor constructs for the sophist. For the Visitor's definition answers the question of what the sophist does, and not of who he is.[289] If we consider the philosopher in relation to her deeds we will have to conclude that she is indistinguishable from the sophist insofar as these deeds, or ἔργα, are concerned. In other words, as I will elaborate in this chapter, from the mortal point of view the sophist and the philosopher are identical. Therefore, Plato could not have written a third dialogue entitled the *Philosopher*, that would be consistent with the *Sophist*, i.e. by using the same method of analysis and exposition. However, the *Sophist* does provide us with sufficient philosophical material to define the philosopher. In other words, I will show that this dialogue effectively contains in itself two dialogues, and Plato, through the character of the Eleatic Visitor, does satisfy Socrates' request to speak both about the philosopher and the sophist. This is the case because the most complete or exhaustive understanding of the philosopher is possible only through exploring the relationship between the philosopher and the sophist. For it is through their oneness, that includes in itself the difference between them, that the being of the philosopher can come to light most fully. In other words, the structure of this text reflects the metaphysical claim that the sophist and the philosopher ought to be one.

Elucidating these points will require me to approach the dialogue on several different levels. Let me proceed then with the first one.

The First Take or the Mortal's Failure

I would like to begin by examining the fact that when the philosopher and the sophist are assessed from the mortal perspective they cannot be distinguished. That is, I will explore why the place of philosophy, or the philosopher, cannot be delineated or circumscribed if we focus on what she does or says, i.e. on the deeds.

But what exactly do we mean by the deeds or ἔργα? We mean occurrences insofar as they are facts, i.e. as scientifically verifiable, and thus, are objective or external facts, because in order to be such they must be seen and judged from the outside.[290] To use the terminology of Chapter 1, the deeds are a subset of appearances, or a part of the world insofar as it appears. In this sense intuition is not a deed, just as the Event isn't (as opposed to the events), even though this does not entail that intuition or the Event simply

[289] In addition, it can be argued that the same kind of a definition—the kind that is concerned with the deeds—is also furnished in the *Statesman*. However, at the present moment this lies beyond the scope of this chapter, since my argument, though strengthened, would remain essentially the same.

[290] As will become evident later in the chapter, the distinction between subjective and objective, between internal and external is necessary at this point only in order to be overcome.

happens to us, and that there is no activity or engagement on 'our side'—there most certainly is, but this activity is not of the same kind as what I call the deeds. However, intuition's or the Event's articulation or externalization appears as a deed, and so always has a cause and consequences. The deeds can be represented in a linear fashion, or they are subject to the laws of the timeline. For example, I need to have the money to pay for a trip to visit my friends, therefore I agree to teach you for a certain fee, and as a consequence I am able to spend time with them. The deed, obviously, would consist in teaching you. Or, simpler yet, I want to convince you of something, for instance, that you should not underline in library books, especially with a pen, and so, I present you with an argument, and as a result you go to look for a notebook and a pencil. Again, my argument—effective in this case—is a deed. The same even holds in a situation in which I want to convince you that you don't know something that you think you know, and thus, make you search for an answer yourself. But this is a more complex case, and will be dealt with later in the chapter.

What do we get by assessing the deeds, then? We get an "objective" perspective on somebody, but by being such it cannot tell us about the level or the degree of engagement of the human being with being or the *is*. As will become clear shortly, it is precisely this degree of engagement that distinguishes the philosopher from the sophist. So, if the deeds are a kind of appearances, then judging by the deeds (or judging the deeds) is the realm of the mortals. From the mortal perspective the philosopher and the sophist are one. As we will see, in thinking that way the mortal is not that far off from truth as might seem. However, he or she does not realize the full significance of this claim: he or she does not understand *what* this oneness means, for from the mortal perspective the difference between the two is not visible. Eventually, I too will argue that the philosopher and the sophist comprise a unity. However, I will show in which sense this unity is not an identity, since it contains within itself an important difference. But before all of this can be established, we need to look at the philosopher and the sophist from the mortal perspective.

As I already indicated, one of the most fruitful ways to do this is through Plato's *Sophist*. Let's, then, turn to the dialogue itself.

Let me first rehearse the setup of the dialogue, since in the *Sophist* in particular, and in most of the Plato's writings in general what is being said cannot be separated from the way in which it is said, or the arguments cannot be removed from their context without sacrificing the meaning of the whole. In other words, Plato designs his dialogues in such a way as to make it possible for us to participate in the creation of the philosophical truths, and this means that what often might appear as an insignificant detail will later turn out to be an essential component of Plato's philosophical thinking.

At the beginning of the dialogue, a visitor is introduced into a conversation that began the previous day between Socrates, Theodoros, and the young Theaetetus, and which is "recorded" by Plato in his other dialogue, *Theaetetus*. At the end of that dialogue Socrates goes to "meet his indictment"[291] brought by Meletus, having agreed to reconvene the following morning in order to continue the conversation. It is on that following morning that Theodoros introduces "a certain visitor, the kind from Elea, who

[291] *Plato's* Sophist. Tr. William S. Cobb. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1990, 210d.

is a colleague of those associated with Parmenides and Zeno—a man who is very much a philosopher."[292]

It is at this point that Socrates alludes to the following verses of Homer:

> A poor show, that—hitting this famished tramp—
> bad business, if he happened to be a god.
> You know they go in a foreign guise, the gods do,
> looking like strangers, turning up
> in towns and settlements to keep an eye
> on manners, good or bad.[293]

This is a passage from the part of the *Odyssey* where one of Penelope's most fierce suitors, Antinoos, throws a stool at an old beggar, a visitor, and is rebuked by somebody from the crowd. In this case the visitor is not really a visitor. He is, of course, Odysseus disguised as a beggar. And even though he is not a god it is the divine power of the goddess Athena that transformed Odysseus into a stranger, a visitor.

And so, Socrates too asks Theodoros whether this visitor is not really a visitor but a god in disguise. To which Theodoros replies that he is definitely not a god, although "he is divine, for I address all philosophers as such."[294] And Socrates retorts:

> Yet, one might suggest that this latter genus [the philosopher] may not be much easier to discern than that of a god. For because of the ignorance of everyone else, these men—those who are not fake but real philosophers—certainly take on all sorts of appearances when they visit our cities…. At times they take on the appearance of statesman, at times that of sophists, and at times they may impress some people as being completely mad.[295]

The Visitor, according to Theodoros, is a philosopher, and divine. And even though he is not a god, and gods are notoriously difficult to discern[296] due to the inability of the mortals to endure the sight of the divine beauty, the Visitor still might be difficult to know for who he is, and at times he will appear as a sophist.[297]

So, the Visitor is divine, and this is so, by virtue of his being a philosopher. Yet, because we are human he in his divine being will appear as, or show himself under the guise of, the sophist.

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[292] *Ibid*., 216a.

[293] Homer. *Odyssey*. Tr. Robert Fitzgerald, New York: Farrow, Straus and Giroux, 1998, XVII, 630-640.

[294] *Sophist*, 216b.

[295] *Ibid*., 216c-d.

[296] Cf. *Odyssey*, as well as Jean-Pierre Vernant's "Mortals and the Immortals: The Body of the Divine" in *Mortals and Immortals*, pp. 27-50.

[297] In the present work I will not be concerned with the Visitor—or, later, the philosopher—appearing as the statesman or mad.

But, perhaps, this preamble is only a joke on Plato's part, or, more precisely, an instance of his famous irony: all this talk about the divine nature of the philosopher, of her appearing to be the sophist… Do we have a good reason to take what Socrates says here about philosophers seriously?

In fact, it is all too easy to pass over these first few sentences as completely extraneous, and concentrate instead on the numerous arguments that fill the body of the dialogue. Indeed, there is a lot of difficult work ahead of anybody who wants to scrutinize the details of these arguments—they are notoriously difficult to follow. But in this first take at the dialogue I will not be concerned with this sort of work. Instead, as I indicated above, I would like to invite us to look at the dialogue in, perhaps, an unusual way: to allow for a moment that it is a riddle, carefully crafted by sly Plato.[298]

So, giving Plato (and Socrates) the benefit of doubt, we will take the opening remarks seriously, and we will remember that the Visitor is introduced as a philosopher, and *therefore* he is supposed to be divine, and, finally, that because of our ignorance he will take on an appearance of a sophist.

But even though he is introduced in this way, we—the readers or the listeners—do not (yet) know who he really is. Let's find out.

In preparation for the close analysis of the *Sophist*, I did a preliminary, cursory reading of it and found myself being swayed from thinking that the Visitor is a philosopher to thinking that he must be a sophist, and then to being quite sure that he is a philosopher after all, only to be again disabused of this notion. This experience provides the first hint into the main problem of the dialogue: it is impossible to distinguish the sophist from the philosopher if we are to proceed by looking at what is done, at the arguments that are made, and at the words that are spoken, and in this case the arguments and the words of the Visitor.[299]

And if we turn to the text of the dialogue and consider how the sophist is being defined we find that the Visitor runs into the same problem. For he and the young Theaetetus begin by "seeking out and bringing to light in the account whatever he [the sophist] *is*."[300] So, they begin with the *is*, with the ἐστί of the sophist, and yet, almost immediately they slip into what the sophist *does*, or into her ἔργα. And this is how it happens. In the Visitor's attempt to clarify the method of division that he will use to find the sophist he gives an example of finding the definition of the angler—the definition that entirely relies on what the angler does, or on his works: "Then with regard to the art of angling, you and I are now in agreement not only about the name, but we also have an adequate grasp of the account of the activity (τοὔργον—crasis for τὸ ἔργον) itself."[301] So, after all, the Visitor and Theaetetus will be concerned with the art of sophistry, and not

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[298] In Chapter 1 I clarify the way in which I use the term "riddle." There I explore in more detail that a riddle is a text that is intended by its author to trick us into thinking by ourselves, or take up an active position in relation to this text.

[299] In other words, and I am getting a little bit ahead of myself here, such an experience becomes meaningful if we see Plato as *also* a sophist who is tricking himself and us into thinking philosophically.

[300] *Plato's* Sophist, 218b, emphasis mine.

[301] *Ibid*., 221b.

with who the sophist is, even though the Visitor once more uses the *is* after Theaetetus agrees with the statement quoted above: "Come then. Using this as paradigm, let us also try to discover what the sophist is."[302] This almost imperceptible shift of focus at the very beginning of the dialogue structures the whole of the ensuing discussion including the now unavoidable failure of the end. Indeed, as we will shortly witness, the Visitor and Theaetetus have most definitely failed to catch the sophist by the end of the dialogue. That is, insofar as the deeds or the works are concerned the sophist turns out to be indistinguishable from the philosopher. Or, it is impossible to tell them apart by their arguments, methodology, terminology, GRE scores, or the degree of completion of all the seminar and non-seminar requirements on time. And yet, it seems, this is all we have, and all that we will ever have. That is, defining somebody by their works and their words is the only reasonable thing to do. And yet, this reasonable thing leads us nowhere; it makes us walk in circles—just like Parmenides' two-headed mortals. Indeed, insofar as we are trying to distinguish from the perspective of the mortals, i.e. by comparing and contrasting the appearances, we are doomed to fail.

This connection with Parmenides' two-headed mortals brings us to another interesting issue at the heart of this dialogue.

As you recall, the Visitor is introduced by Theodoros in the following manner: "we've brought a certain visitor, the kind from Elea who is a colleague of those associated with [or a disciple or a pupil from the school of] Parmenides and Zeno—a man who is very much a philosopher."[303] The Visitor, then, from the very outset is explicitly connected with Parmenides as one of his followers. And Socrates asks him to speak about the sophist, the philosopher, and the statesman *as a representative* of the Parmenidean school: "But I would like to ask our visitor, if it is agreeable to him, what those in his area believe about these names and how they use them."[304] So, the Visitor is urged to answer on behalf of somebody else, on behalf of his great predecessor. But, in fact, what happens is that the Visitor ends up speaking for himself. Moreover, he challenges the philosophical authority of Parmenides. How exactly does this happen?

Parmenides is mentioned at 237a when the Visitor and Theaetetus have begun their last, sixth (seventh, according to the recounting that occurs at 231d-231e) division, and are trying to locate the sophist in the art of image-making. The Visitor stumbles upon the difficulty with non-being, for it appears to him to be "in some way," and therefore is forced to revisit the doctrines of his philosophical predecessor Parmenides who famously declares that it is necessary for non-being not to be, and that it is wholly unknowable, and inexpressible.[305]

But before the Visitor ventures to talk about non-being he makes three requests of Theaetetus: (1) to be forgiving of him if he "pull[s] away even slightly from so strong an argument of their previous discussion," (2) not to assume that he is becoming "a sort of

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[302] *Ibid*., 221c.

[303] *Ibid*., 216a.

[304] *Ibid*., 216e.

[305] Cf. Chapter 1 and Parmenides, *Poem*, B2.

patricide," and finally, (3) not to think that he is mad when he will "switch back and forth with every step."[306] Presently I will be focusing on the second request, since it most explicitly refers to Parmenides, and, as I will argue, becomes the point that breaks the whole dialogue. In other words, the rest of the discussion, and the entire dialogue seems in a certain sense to be held together by this one knot, namely, by the question of whether the Visitor does or does not commit patricide. I believe that if we manage to untie the knot we will be able to see much more clearly the dialogue as a whole: to see not only the structure of its many arguments, and how they all fit together, but also find out something about the relationship between the philosopher and the sophist. So, let's look more closely at what the Visitor does with the words of Parmenides.

Right after making his second request the Visitor asserts that

> it will be necessary to put a statement (*logos*) of our father Parmenides to the test [βασανίζειν, also: to closely examine, to try the genuiness of, to put to torture] and overwhelm it [βιάζεσθαι, also: to overpower by force, to do violence] with the claim that what is not in some sense is and in turn again that what is in some sense is not.[307]

That is, he will take the *logos* of Parmenides and do violence to it in order to test its genuiness. And he'll do violence to this *logos by the being of what is not, and the non-being of what is, in some sense.* In the process of this testing a long chain of arguments ensues, and finally the last definition of the sophist emerges—the definition that is not contested either by the Visitor, or by any other participants of the dialogue, including Socrates. So, at a first glance the dialogue has a very happy, Hollywood-like ending: even though the Parmenidean doctrine had to suffer, the aim of the dialogue is achieved—the final definition of the sophist is produced and no objections are raised. Yet, the reader or the listener is bound to be left with the deep feeling of dissatisfaction, the source of which, at least at first, might not be entirely clear.

When we try to determine more precisely the source of this dissatisfaction we cannot but notice that numerous times during the dialogue, but especially at its very end the sophist of the Visitor's definition looks all too much like the philosopher.[308] Consider, for instance, the very last sentences of the *Sophist*—the last definition or a synopsis of the final division:

> The imitation that is under the *contradiction-producing*, *ironic* part of the opinionated type under the appearance kind derived from the art of making images that is defined as not a divine but a human part of making, the part that involves *conjuring by means of arguments*—whoever says that the real sophist is of this lineage and blood will, it seems likely, say what is most true.[309]

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[306] *Ibid*., 241c, d, 242a.

[307] *Ibid*., 241d.

[308] Cf. *ibid*., 230e, 253c-253e.

[309] *Ibid*., 268d, emphasis added.

If anyone attempted to define the Socratic art would this not be the best definition of it? And Socrates, of course, is our Western paradigm of the philosopher.

In order to dispel any doubts regarding this point let me examine the last definition, and then point to some other places in the dialogue where the sophist "gets too close" to the philosopher.

Socrates is both famous and infamous for his irony. In addition, he is often accused of manipulating the arguments in such a way, as to lead his interlocutor into contradicting himself. In other words, Socrates contrives—by means of arguments or *logos*—the situations in which the ignorance of his interlocutor becomes apparent. That is, Socrates produces appearances. Socrates is also renowned for emphasizing his ignorance—the fact that he knows that he does not know. And there is no doubt, of course, as to Socrates' mortality.

Gilles Deleuze, whose relationship to Platonism I will discuss in the Conclusion, also notices that the Visitor "gives a definition of the sophist such that he can no longer be distinguished from Socrates himself: the ironic imitator who proceeds by brief arguments (questions and problems)."[310]

But even earlier in the text we run into situations where the sophist looks very much like Socrates. After agreeing that the sophistical art is the art of image-making[311] the Visitor asks Theaetetus to define the image to prevent the sophist from "twisting their statements back into their contraries."[312] Theaetetus proceeds to enumerate the different kinds of images that we encounter—images in water and in mirrors, images painted and sculpted—but the Visitor warns Theaetetus that the sophist will find Theaetetus' "definition" of the appearances unacceptable.

> When you answer him in such a way, if you speak of something in mirrors or of fabricated things, speaking to him as though he could see, he will laugh at your statements, pretending not to know about mirrors, water, or vision at all, and he will question you only on the basis of your statements.—About what?—That which occurs throughout all those things you speak of as 'many' while deeming it appropriate to address them by one name, saying 'image' for all of them as though it were one thing.[313]

Doesn't this description of the sophist's activity perfectly match what Socrates does to his interlocutors in many of the dialogues? Isn't it one of the Socratic tricks that enables him to disabuse his audience of the pretensions to know? For instance, in *Meno* after witnessing a similar enumeration Socrates says ironically (recall the Visitor's

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[310] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 68.

[311] 234b-235b.

[312] Cf. 239d.

[313] 239e-240a.

remark that "he will laugh at your statements"): "I wanted one virtue and I find that you have a whole swarm of virtues to offer."[314]

A bit earlier in the *Sophist* we encounter yet another instance of the indistinguishability of the philosopher and the sophist, or we come up against the point where the sophist approximates the philosopher too closely. It has to do with the fact that sophistry is defined as a kind of cross-examination insofar as it is "the greatest and most authoritative of purifications." This is the fifth/sixth definition according to which the sophist is "concerned with the soul and a purifier of opinions that are impediments to learning"[315] and includes the following description of the art of purification. I quote at length, for this passage will be of significance for the later sections of this chapter as well.

> On the other hand, some who've given themselves their own *logos* seem to believe that every case of being ill-informed is involuntary, and that the person who thinks he is wise would never be willing to learn about those things about which he thinks he is clever, and that after much trouble the admonishing form of instruction accomplishes little… So they prepare themselves to cast out this sort of opinion in another way… When someone who thinks he is making sense about something is talking nonsense, they question him about it. Then, while he shifts his ground, they examine his opinions casually, and by bringing them together in their discussions they put them beside one another in the same place. By putting the opinions together, they show that they contradict themselves at the same time about the same things concerning the same things in the same respects… [For the soul] will not gain any benefit from the learning given to it until someone, through cross-examination, reduces the one who is cross-examined to a state of shame and *removes* the opinions that are impediments to learning…[316]

The issue of removing or destroying the opinions will become very prominent in the next sections. For now I would like to focus on the undeniable fact that this description fits Socratic deeds or ἔργα very well. The Visitor recognizes this too because only with great reluctance does he allow the sophist to claim this art for himself, warning Theaetetus to be careful "around similarities:" "And a wolf is like a dog, the wildest animal like the tamest. The person who is not to take a fall must, before all else, always keep up his guard around similarities, for the genus is most slippery."[317]

Another such similarity emerges after the first five definitions are recounted.[318] The Visitor proposes to take up just one of the features of sophistry, namely his art of

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[314] Plato, *Meno*, 71e-72a.

[315] *Plato's* Sophist, 231e.

[316] *Ibid*., 230a-c, emphasis added.

[317] *Ibid*., 231a.

[318] As I pointed out earlier, recounted incorrectly, thus making six out of five definitions.

arguing or "a certain capacity for effectiveness in controversy about *everything*."[319] At this point the Visitor is especially displeased with the sophist because it is impossible to know everything. But, as you might recall, the philosopher is characterized in just that way in the *Republic*: "no one will dispute us when we say that some other [the dialectical] inquiry methodically attempts with respect to *everything* to grasp—about each several thing itself—what each is. For all other τέχναι are directed to human opinions and desires, or to generation and composition, or to the care of what is grown or put together."[320]

Based on the above evidence, and many more "facts" that spring up at other points in Plato's corpus we must acknowledge the failure of the final definition, and of the dialogue as a whole[321] to capture the sophist or to be the *logos* of the sophist. For by means of this final definition we are incapable of discriminating between him and the philosopher. So, it is either a definition of both, or of neither one. And thus, we have to acknowledge the failure of the dialogue as a whole insofar as it was supposed to furnish us with such a definition, as well as the failure of the Visitor to come up with a definition on his own. The Visitor's act of thinking failed. He did not manage to do violence to the words of Parmenides, he did not kill his father.

But from under the ruins of this final definition something of great significance emerges. Ultimately, it has to do with the being of philosophy, and more precisely with the relationship between the sophist and the philosopher. It is one of the conditions that makes it possible for the mortal to become the philosopher.

I will call this condition the necessity of violence. For the Visitor, in order to be a philosopher in his own right, and not merely a spokesperson for Parmenides, he needs to suspend the great authority of his teacher, to dispel his teacher's shadow, even if this means that at least at a first glance the Visitor's attempt at philosophizing results in a complete fiasco. The moment when the Visitor takes responsibility for thought occurs when he acknowledges that "when he was younger" he thought that he "understood perfectly" the discussions about being and non-being (what is and what is not) but now he finds that he is in perplexity about it, that he does not understand it.[322] Notice, it is now that we need to investigate what is perplexing us, it is now that we need to put the words of the great thinkers of the past to the test. And so, the Visitor thinks. He is attempting to do philosophy right in front of us, having abandoned the fear of not conforming to the tradition for the sake of opening up an instance for thinking. Formally

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[319] *Ibid*., 232e, emphasis added.

[320] *The Republic of Plato*. Tr. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1968, 533b, emphasis added.

[321] In addition to the places in the text that I pointed out just now, the other five/six definitions are obviously too many and too different to count as *the* definition of the sophist. The Visitor admits that the sophist appeared "as so many things. If one is to speak truly and with confidence, whatever should one say the sophist really is?" (*Plato's* Sophist, 231b-c). It is because the Visitor is dissatisfied with having so many definitions, that he decides to consider what feature is common to all of them. He begins by discussing the fact that the sophist is an arguer about everything (cf. *ibid*., 232a and ff.) and consequently produces a new and the last division. Thus, in a sense, we can say that all of the first five/six definitions are contained in the last one.

[322] Cf. *ibid*., 243b.

speaking, he is quite unsuccessful—the definition simply does not work, the path that has been banned by Parmenides, and down which the Visitor tried to travel, has indeed turned out to be impassable. As I will argue later, he misunderstands a crucial moment of Parmenidean thought: we cannot have "non-being in some sense," but we do have more than just being, or the is includes in itself everything, even that which seems not to be. Thus Parmenides' ontology remains intact: being does not admit of non-being. The Parmenidean logos has withstood the test, and has turned out to be genuine. Yet, the testing itself is absolutely necessary, for only through the murder which does not happen does there open up a space for the Visitor to be a philosopher.

The Second Take or the Sophist's Success

From the initial encounter with the dialogue we have established that the philosopher and the sophist *seem* to be identical, i.e. from the mortal perspective—the perspective that engages with the appearances only—they do the same thing. For instance, both produce appearances by imitation while using irony, both do this through short private speeches. In addition, we began seeing that one of philosophy's conditions is the mortal risking to think *now*, and such an act is made possible by the sophist's destruction of the authority of the past masters.[323] At this point, however, there is a need for a second look at the dialogue, in which the question of who the sophist and the philosopher actually are, that is, what their ontological status is will have to be elucidated.

As we have seen, the dialogue did not directly answer the question of who the sophist is. Yet, the Visitor does this indirectly by engaging with the question of being and non-being, starting at 241d. In this section I will closely examine several of the Visitor's arguments in this part of the dialogue, and establish that the difference between the philosopher and the sophist consists in how they position themselves in relation to being. The philosopher is the place from which thinking-being occurs, or we can say that the philosopher engages being or enables the oneness of thinking and being. The sophist, on the other hand, has something to do with non-being, although this manner of speaking is necessarily metaphorical, since there is no non-being. And yet, to use Plato's image, the sophist "flees into the darkness of non-being (μὴ ὄντος) and, with practice [τριβῇ—mere practice, *routine* as opposed to true art], attaches to it and is difficult to discern because of the darkness of the place (τόπου)."[324] So, among other things, we have to understand in what sense the sophist flees into the "darkness of non-being."

If we look more closely at what happens in the dialogue itself, we notice that it is the difficulty of locating the sophist in the art of making appearances (as opposed to that

[323] I will explore the issue in the next chapter on Descartes.

[324] *Plato's* Sophist, 254a.

of likenesses)[325] that forces the Visitor and Theaetetus to speak about non-being.[326] At 240a, when trying to define the image, Theaetetus admits that it is a thing "made similar to the true one." The Visitor then leads Theaetetus to agree that "similar to the true" is what is not true, and since only the true really is, then the not true is not. As a result we get non-being. It is here that both of the interlocutors commit a grave mistake that consists in not realizing that what is or the world includes both the appearances[327] and being, and the appearances and being comprise one. Since what is not true, or what is similar to the true is also an appearance, what is includes in itself what is not actually true. Therefore, one does not need to posit non-being in order to make room for falsehood, corruption, ugliness, discord or sickness.[328] In other words, when we speak of non-being, as we do in ascertaining that something is not true, we are not acknowledging that non-being is, but rather dealing with the mere semblance[329] of non-being, and therefore, with the (subset of) appearances, or something that is. So, the confusion and the arguments that follow 240a need not have arisen if the Visitor had not first posited or agreed to the existence of non-being, but rather, just like the Parmenidean goddess, admitted all that there is into the oneness of the world.

This initial mistake, then, is a result of not understanding the words of Parmenides. Indeed, the Visitor admits such lack of understanding when he tells Theaetetus that when he was younger he thought that he understood perfectly when the others, including Parmenides, spoke of being and non-being.[330] Since he now realizes that he does not understand, he proceeds to "question" the past masters regarding being or τὸ εἶναι.[331] But his way of questioning consists in positing non-being instead of engaging with the words of Parmenides and trying to make the most sense of them by giving them a generous reading. Because of this lack of engagement with Parmenides while "questioning" him, the Visitor exposes the fact that he still does not understand him. Therefore, the several arguments by means of which the Visitor presumes to expose the inaccuracy of Parmenides' ontological claim that only the one is are all based on a misunderstanding.[332]

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[325] *Ibid*., 235b-236b.

[326] The Visitor divides the art of image-making (εἰδωλοποιική) into the art of the likeness (εἰκαστική) and the art of the appearance (φανταστική) at 235b-236c. I would like to point out that the Visitor's use of the notion "appearances" is vastly different from the one that I have been developing in this work. I take it to mean both what the Visitor here calls likenesses and appearances, and everything other than the (nameless) *is* or being.

[327] To use the Visitor's terminology, the images and the appearances as well as being are included into what is.

[328] Cf. *ibid*., 228a-b.

[329] I will discuss this issue in more details at the end of the second section of this chapter.

[330] Cf. *ibid*., 243b.

[331] *Ibid*., 243e.

[332] *Ibid*., 244b.

Let's look at these arguments more closely. The Visitor admits that his arguments are by no means exhaustive: "Countless thousands of other difficulties (μυρία ἀπεράντους ἀπορίας) regarding each point will appear to anyone" who says that being (τὸ ὂν) is either some two (δύο τινε) or one (ἕν μόνον εἶναι).[333] However, all of them will follow the pattern of argumentation or will have a logical form identical to that which the Visitor uses when discussing the difficulty with the thing versus its name(s), and with the whole versus its parts. Because of the uniformity of the arguments I will only focus on the first set (the arguments about the thing and its names) to expose the problem with the Visitor's reasoning. The Visitor begins his attack on Parmenides' logos by paraphrasing it. At this point in the dialogue the Visitor and Theaetetus pretend to be speaking to Parmenides directly: "You surely declare only the one to be (ἕν μόνον εἶναι)." In fact, the *Poem* of Parmenides does not contain such a formulation, and since at an earlier time in the dialogue as well as in the middle of the present discussion the Visitor actually quotes from the *Poem*, we can conclude that he is supposed to be well acquainted with it. Which means, of course, that by such paraphrasing the Visitor is gesturing towards either his misunderstanding or his purposeful twisting of the words of Parmenides. For formulated in such a way, as opposed to summarizing the thought of Parmenides in a Heraclitean fashion "All Is One" (ἕν πάντα εἶναι)[334] the thought of Parmenides is more liable to misinterpretation. Since there is no reference to the all, πάντα, in the Visitor's formulation, it is easier to fall into thinking that the one excludes certain beings, or that we are confronted with many things, and have granted being only to one of them and not the others, thus establishing a hierarchy of being. Of course, it is possible to understand and misunderstand both the Visitor's and Heraclitus' formulations. But some articulations are more misleading than others, and in this case the Visitor chooses the more misleading one, and thus, encourages the creation of a straw man out of Parmenides.

But let's look at the arguments that are designed to challenge this formulation, however misleading it is. The Visitor claims that if the name is other than what it names than we get two things, and thus the supposed oneness is destroyed. If, on the other hand, the name is the same or identical to what it names we end up asserting absurdities, since the name would turn out to be "the name of nothing" or "only the name of a name."[335] But the relationship between names and things is neither that of radical difference, nor of identity. As we have seen in Chapter 1, thinking and being constitute oneness that preserves their difference.[336] So, we can imagine Parmenides replying that the name is neither identical nor different from the thing it names. Such a claim is, as we know from

[333] *Ibid*., 245d.

[334] Heraclitus, Fragment 50, cf. note 1 in Chapter 1.

[335] *Plato's* Sophist, 244d.

[336] The fact that the Visitor chooses to confront Parmenides using the problem of the relationship between names and what they name is quite significant considering *Cratilus*.

the *Poem*, a paradoxical truth. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the *is*, or being is by no means compromised by its names.[337]

So, the Visitor twists Parmenides' formulation into something seemingly very similar, but that has entirely different connotations, and then destroys it with a move that is illicit for somebody who knows and understands Parmenides' *Poem*. So, the Visitor does this by means of positing non-being and reveals his sophistical character when he thus twists the words of Parmenides with slight-of-hand virtuosity in order to confuse the mortal who misunderstands these words. Let's look at this in more detail.

As I argued, the problem that underlies all of the Visitor's thinking from 240a on, is that the Visitor creates the semblance of non-being by misrepresenting the nature of being, and in particular, by misunderstanding the fact that the *is* includes all of the different appearances. In other words, the Visitor posits or, we can even say, forces non-being. Instead of beginning ontologically with being he starts from non-being. This is evident if we consider that as his goal he proclaims to show that "what is not in some sense is" and "what is in some sense is not."[338] Later in the dialogue the Visitor even defines the goal and the method of his inquiry in the following way: "to say of what is not that it really is what is not and get away unharmed."[339] In other words, having presupposed "what is not," all he needs to do is provide arguments for it. This way of approaching the issue, namely shifting our attention to trying to understand in what sense non-being is, creates the semblance of non-being. It is, of course, the sophist who makes it look like there is non-being, or creates the semblance of non-being, and in this respect the Visitor is indeed a sophist. However, considered philosophically—and this means by starting with being—our goal should be to understand how within what is or the world there is both being and the appearances (including the appearance of non-being). Or, put differently, as the philosopher, one is trying to understand how alongside the *is* there are the appearances, and in what sense they are.

So, ultimately, what makes the Visitor a sophist is his decision or determination to start with non-being. This decision goes all the way back to the beginning of the dialogue when he chooses to treat the question of who the sophist is before examining the philosopher: "But for now you must join in the investigation in common with me, beginning *first*, as it appears (φαίνεται) to me, with the sophist, seeking out and bringing to light in the account (λόγω) whatever he is (ἔστι)."[340] So, beginning with the sophist leads us to the conundrums that elicit—and then destroy—the mortal understanding of who the philosopher is. Only having thus cleared the ground, so to speak, can we begin with the philosopher, who ontologically is prior to the sophist. So, if we are dealing with the mortal we switch the order of exposition and put the sophist first for purely

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[337] Recall what I called the goddess' act of transferring the power of naming to the confused mortals in Pathmark 3 of B8 (Parmenides, *Poem*).

[338] *Plato's* Sophist, 241d.

[339] *Ibid*., 254c.

[340] *Ibid*., 218b, emphasis added.

pedagogical purposes.[341] This is exactly what the Visitor does. However, since the philosopher is first ontologically, the Visitor cannot but keep "stumbling upon" the philosopher. As already mentioned, this happens when the art of purification is discussed,[342] but, even more importantly, when the Visitor happens upon the "liberated people": "Or, by Zeus, are we failing to notice that we have stumbled across the knowledge of liberated people, and are we likely, while looking for the sophist, to have found the philosopher first?"[343]

Let's define, unlike the Visitor, the aspect of the human being called "the philosopher" first. The philosopher is the place in which thinking-being happens, or the oneness of thinking and being is actualized. Thus the philosopher is oriented toward or concerned with being through thinking, where thinking is not restricted to rational thought. The philosopher always proceeds from oneness. In opposition to the philosopher, the aspect called "the sophist" is the place from which being is disrupted or, better, the semblance of such disruption is fabricated—the semblance called "non-being." But how can the sophist create the semblance of non-being, i.e. the semblance of something that is not? Such semblance is created by the act of positing non-being or limiting the area of influence of being. The sophist always begins by showing the groundlessness of (mortal) truths, and so creates the appearance of discontinuity, of separation, of radical difference.

Just like the philosopher the sophist is real, even though his way of being is the denial of being, i.e. he emphasizes the differences, he negates instead of seeing one or affirming. When the philosopher looks at the mortal and the sophist she sees only the philosopher in them, that is, ultimately she sees only herself. Whereas when the sophist looks at the other two he sees only the difference: that between the mortal and the philosopher, as well as between himself and both of them. However, as we will shortly see, the sophist, even though seemingly forcing non-being into being, ends up only confirming the oneness of being.

So, the sophist is the philosopher's shadow—the shadow that is simultaneously not the philosopher, and yet not not the philosopher, i.e. the sophist is not some radically incommensurable Other to the philosopher and also not identical to her. And the philosopher can become effective with the mortal only if she accepts her shadow, i.e. accepts the fact that there is this difference in herself. Moreover, if the philosopher tries to purge herself of this difference by destroying or expelling the sophist she would necessarily destroy the possibility of ever being the philosopher.

At this point we can return to the issue of the mortal's inability to distinguish between the philosopher and the sophist. First of all, the mortals have the difficulty of understanding who the philosopher and the sophist are, although this difficulty is "of a different sort."[344] That is, it has to do with different reasons. It is hard to discern the

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[341] I will explore this point in the Conclusion when dealing with Deleuze's understanding of the method of intuition.

[342] *Ibid*., 230a- 231e.

[343] *Ibid*., 253c.

[344] *Ibid*., 254a and ff.

sophist because he "flees into the darkness of what is not and, with practice, attaches to it and is difficult to discern because of the darkness of the place." In other words, because of the confusion that the sophist creates by means of his denial of being and truth.

> But the philosopher, who always attaches to the form of what is through reasoning (λογισμῶν), is, in turn, not at all easy to see because of the brightness of the region, for in most people (πολλῶν) the soul's eyes are unable to endure direct vision of the divine.[345]

The philosopher is difficult to discern because she "always attaches" to the *is*, and not to the appearances. But from the mortal perspective the *is* is not visible or discernible, and only the appearances in their causal connections are. So, in order to see the philosopher as such the mortal has to become the philosopher him- or herself. And in this sense the sophist can actually help the mortal to become the philosopher by confusing him or her: the sophist's disruption of the appearances by means of the appearance of non-being can clear the place for the philosopher. The ultimate task of the philosopher—what, as I will point out in a moment, Plato calls the philosopher's exalted state—is to master this art of sophistry or to include the sophist in herself in order to be effective in the realm of the mortal.

This persistent ignorance of ours as to who is the philosopher and who is the sophist is due to the fact that the philosopher and the sophist are the opposites, or the contraries, unlike being and non-being which are contradictories (are not "the same and not the same" of the *Poem*). The sophist is not non-being—that being downright impossible—but he is trying to disrupt the third way (the way on which the confused mortals wander, the way which turns back on itself, the way which oscillates between being and non-being, the way which constantly undermines itself) by attempting to actualize the second, non-existent road. But, of course, he fails to do that, although his effort is not fruitless, and can be "used" to bring out the philosopher in the mortal. The sophist can be "put to good use" insofar as tricking or seducing the mortals into philosophical thinking is concerned. In this sense Socrates is (also) a sophist, since he tries to bring himself (as a mortal) and other mortals closer to being, into the interval of time.

So, the Visitor insofar as he is a mortal misunderstands Parmenides: he has not understood him until the present moment, although he begins to realize this only now when he is confused, i.e. when the Visitor's sophist has created the semblance of non-being. So, the Visitor's confusing arguments are really sophistical tricks serving to disorient the mortal in himself as well as in his listeners or interlocutors.

Therefore, the Visitor indeed does not kill Parmenides, although he does commit a murder—he kills the mortal understanding of Parmenides, or the ossified image of Parmenidean thought. He does this by means of the sophistical trick, or by actualizing his sophistical aspect, i.e. through creating the semblance of non-being. Ultimately, the purpose of this act is to "clear the way" for the philosopher. The Visitor's (qua sophist) arguments are indeed designed to confuse. One of the translators, Harold North Fouler, even comments on the original Greek sentence in one of the arguments about the

[345] *Ibid*., 254a.

difference or identity of the name, and of the thing it names: "The sentence is made somewhat difficult of comprehension, doubtless for the purpose of indicating the confusion caused by the identification of the name with the thing."[346] Admitting non-being into his ontology reinforced the confusion about the sophist instead of clarifying the matter; but it reinforced or created the confusion so that we ourselves might be put into a situation when we have to clarify the issue on our own, so that just like the Visitor we too take up the initiative instead of simply being the passive readers of Plato's texts.

The Visitor's violence is not directed against Parmenides but rather against his effigy, i.e. the authority of the "past masters," against the non-originary, linear conception of philosophy. But what is the authority of Parmenides or Hegel? It is the philosophical thought that has turned into an appearance of itself due to the fact that it has been repeated without being understood. Such ossified thought is the mortal understanding of philosophy. So, the Visitor strips the mortal in himself and in us of these inflexible opinions, he destroys them in the process of testing them. In the end it is the mortal who suffers violence and not Parmenides. This violence is, indeed, a necessary one, for without it there can be no philosophy right *now*, in other words, we as mortals cannot enter the interval of philosophy if we do not decide or try to think on our own. [347] This means that we as philosophers have to also become the sophist or have to also actualize the sophistical aspect in us. The Visitor does exactly that and that is why he sometimes seems to be the philosopher, and other times the sophist, and we, the readers, will never know who he actually is. Of course, the Visitor is a character in a dialogue designed to be this ambiguous confusing being. After all, he is supposed to be a mark designed by Plato on the path of our inquiry. But what about Plato himself, or any other human being considered a philosopher? Can we ever say with certainty that they are a philosopher? Yes, but only when we ourselves (often with the help of Plato's dialogues) engage with Plato's thought. Otherwise, all we can say about Plato himself is that he *has thought* (in the 4th century B.C. E.) and about his texts that they are intricately designed conditions for our own being a philosopher. The only time when Plato can be legitimately referred to as a philosopher in the present tense is when we ourselves are thinking his thought, or, more precisely, the thought that he tried to think.

However, what we can assert with assurance about Plato is that he is a sophist, since his texts are designed to confuse the mortal. I would like to emphasize once again that the philosopher, the sophist, and the mortal are only aspects of the human being. True, one of these aspects can become more influential or dominant, and yet, each of them is always actualizable. So, Plato, as he is known to us, is a configuration of the sophist-philosopher-mortal, where the "philosopher" and the "sophist" are his most prominent aspects, and the "philosopher" occupies a secondary space, precisely because we, as the mortals, need to first engage with Plato's sophist in order to enable Plato to be the philosopher.

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[346] Plato. *Theaetetus. Sophist*. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002, p. 367.

[347] Cf. Introduction, as well as Chapter 3.

Looking back at this section, we have seen that Plato gives three answers as to who the sophist is. The first one is the sixth/seventh definition[348] at the end of the dialogue that does not "catch" the sophist by himself, but catches him together with the philosopher. Another definition is an indirect or an ostensible one through the character of the Visitor who is a, or even the, sophist insofar as he is trying to confuse the mortal. Finally and most importantly, Plato prepared the terrain or set the conditions for our own definition.

So with the second look at the dialogue we have been able to notice the Visitor's sophist whose goal is to utterly confuse the mortal. As a result of this confusion, the mortal is disabused of her or his misconceptions. But this last point becomes most evident only when we look at the relationship between the sophist and the mortal from yet another angle, i.e. if we consider a configuration in which the philosopher recognizes the need to learn from the sophist. Let's take a third look at the dialogue, then, using as our guide Plato's idea from the *Republic* that the philosopher should also be a ruler, i.e. that she should go back to the cave and learn to communicate effectively with the mortal. I will argue that in order to do this the philosopher needs to engage with the sophist.

The Third Take or the Exalted Philosopher

In what follows, I will focus on the three main reasons for why the sophist is necessary for the philosopher. I will show that, first, he enables the mortal to see the difference between the mortal and the philosopher, and consequently to become the philosopher. Simultaneously, the sophist enables the philosopher to distinguish herself from the mortal, and therefore to be able to communicate effectively with the mortal, or recreate the world. In other words, the sophist is absolutely indispensable insofar as his ability to distinguish or to bring out the difference is concerned. Second, the sophist enables the philosopher to know what and when she does not know, and thus prevents the philosopher from becoming either dogmatic, or uncertain of everything. In other words, the oneness called the philosopher-sophist enables objectivity, but objectivity that is *supple* as opposed to rigid. And third, by including the sophist into herself, the philosopher masters the art of sophistry, i.e. she learns how to effectively alter the world. All three reasons are, of course, interconnected, but here let me explore each one of them in turn.

It is now time to return to the third example of sophistry from the beginning of this chapter, the example in which the sophist tries to make the mortal acknowledge that he does not know what he thought he knew. This Socratic move par excellence is, in fact, sophistry. Why? Because it is an instance of sophistical destruction thanks to which the mortal gains the opportunity to become the philosopher, and the philosopher is enabled to recreate or reorder the world.

[348] Cf. note 321.

The sophistical drive to distinguish is opposed to the philosophical need to unify. For instance, the philosopher always sees the beliefs of the mortal as already containing in themselves truth.[349] Since to the philosopher everybody else is also the philosopher, she is not able to communicate with the mortal insofar as he or she is the mortal. The philosopher qua philosopher doesn't know how to translate what she has seen outside the cave into the "language" of the prisoners and the shadows. The philosopher can communicate only with the philosopher, for only the philosopher can enter the interval of time.[350] This, of course, first of all applies to the philosopher's own mortal; that is, the human being in whom the philosophical aspect dominates is incapable of seeing his or her own mortal. So, the first reason for which the existence of the sophist is necessary for the philosopher is that the sophist shows the mortal to the philosopher, or teaches the philosopher to distinguish herself from the mortal.

In addition, the sophist is the one who has mastered the art of fabrication, and can make the articulations of truth seemly. As Plato tells us, he is the conjurer of images. In this respect the sophist is the one who fulfills the words of the Parmenides' goddess by reaching the point where: "no opinion of mortals will ever leave you [him] behind."[351] It is then the sophist who is able to disrupt the causal chains of the appearances according to which the mortal lives, thereby making it possible for the mortal to become the philosopher and to recreate these causal chains. The mortal needs the sophist to be shaken out of his or her deference or submission to the existent order of appearances. In other words, the sophist with his confusing talk of non-being creates a break in the causal chain of the appearances, showing, for instance, that B does not have to follow from A. The sophist brings in chaos, he disrupts or disorders. The sophist confuses. This is a necessary stage for philosophical thinking. That is, the sophist confronts the mortal aspect through trickery (ἀπάτη), or through manipulation of the appearances.[352] No wonder the Visitor calls the sophist "a sort of magician," [353] or, more exactly, a sort of γοητής or wailer, i.e. the one who howls out enchantments; a sorcerer. Or, as Burkert points out, his term that combines the power of self-transformation with the act of mourning the dead and could have "originally meant something like 'shaman'."[354]

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[349] The approach of the philosopher qua philosopher is visible, for instance, in Hegel's system, since one of the main Hegelian insights is that the first moment of the development of the Spirit already contains it itself the whole of the Spirit, albeit in a latent or, we can perhaps say, an unconscious form.

[350] Cf. Introduction and Chapter 3.

[351] Cf. B8.60-61. As Kingsley translates in *Reality*: "so that nobody among the mortals will ever manage, in practical judgment, to ride past you" (p. 221).

[352] See Marcel Detienne's *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece* (New York: Zone Books, 1999) on the relation of trickery to sophistry, especially Chapter VI, pp. 107-135.

[353] Plato, *Sophist*, 235a.

[354] Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, p.164. At this point the connection with the writings of Deleuze becomes apparent, as we begin understanding the reason for his emphasis on the sophist's significance, for it is the sophist who enables the philosopher to fabricate or recreate the world. Deleuze's purposeful mistake, of course, is to deny any significance to the philosopher. But the exploration of these issues will have to wait until the Conclusion.

So, sophistry is necessary to be able to trick the mortals into "doing" philosophy, or being the place for philosophy (keeping in mind that this place is not passive, but receives the event or the philosophical thought actively; that is, the place is the co-creator of the philosophical thought). Therefore, the sophist can perform a task indispensable for the philosopher: he shows the philosopher how to effectively approach the mortal and, first of all, the mortal in the human being who is the philosopher, or in whom the philosophical aspect dominates.

Let's return for one last time to the issue of the killing of Parmenides in order to deepen even further our understanding of it. Recall that the Visitor warned Theaetetus that even though it might appear like he is committing a patricide, he does not kill his father Parmenides. As we saw, when the Visitor decides to distinguish himself from Parmenides by trying out the genuiness of Parmenidean logos he is acting in a sophistical manner. But the sophist can only put to the test or do violence to the appearances. So, the Visitor qua sophist is not testing Parmenides or the truth of Parmenides' logos, but merely the mortal's understanding of Parmenides. That is precisely why the Visitor paraphrases the central claim of the *Poem* in such a way that it is then easier to misinterpret it, since the Visitor's ultimate goal is to destroy the mortal misinterpretation. Thus, after all, the Visitor does speak truly when he asserts that it will only seem like he is committing a parricide.

So, on the surface level—the level of the mortals—the murder does not happen because the Visitor fails to come up with the definition of the sophist by which we can distinguish him from the philosopher. At a deeper, sophistical level, the Visitor does indeed kill. But he kills not Parmenides but the mortal understanding of Parmenides.

Paradoxically, the sophist brings us closer to being, or to thinking-being, even though he tries to do just the opposite. Looking at this dialogue, for instance, due to the confusing and frustrating search for the sophist we gained not only the greater understanding of the philosopher, but also engaged with the question of being. So, this "advantage of the way" is just another consequence of the sophistical tricks or of his howling. We, as the mortals, cannot but feel dissatisfaction after having read the dialogue, since the final definition does not tell us anything about the sophist, and so, we are forced to engage with the issues by ourselves. But this is exactly the point: if Plato were to give us "philosophical information" such as a straightforward definition of the philosopher and the sophist we wouldn't have been forced to think on our own, and Plato would have precluded us from philosophizing with him. So, through the *Sophist* Plato forces us to rethink the question of being by making the Visitor confuse us, or destroy our mortal notions about being. Thus, at this level of understanding the dialogue we are supposed to lose track, to not be able to clarify the Visitor's arguments. At this level Plato through the character of the Visitor is the sophist for whom we have been searching.

Yet, there is a third—even deeper—level of understanding the *Sophist*. From the perspective of oneness of what is, and so, from the one of the philosopher and the sophist the final definition is *correct* insofar as it shows us the philosopher acting together with the sophist.

From this perspective too the Visitor does not commit a parricide precisely because he cannot but confirm Parmenides' ontological claim: being cannot be destroyed

or shown not to be. This is evident at the point in the dialogue when the Visitor has seemingly overturned the words of Parmenides after a whole series of mind-numbing arguments. After all, he and Theaetetus agree that

> It is, then, by necessity that what is not is, both in relation to motion and throughout all the kinds… And thus, on the same basis, we may rightly say of all things together that they are not things that are, and again, because they participate in what is, that they also are and are things that are.[355]

Also a bit later in the text: "we have not only demonstrated that the things that are not are, but have also brought to light what turns out to be the form of what is not."[356]

However, let us not be misled by the Visitor's use of "what is not." For, as the Visitor himself rightly points out, he merely *disobeyed*[357] Parmenides "by investigating the topic he forbade." But even that he did only to prove Parmenides absolutely right in the end! Consider the Visitor's conclusion about what he and Theaetetus achieved in this investigation: "Then let no one say that when we brought to light what is not, we were venturing to say that it is the contrary of what is." Instead, reminds the Visitor, they found that "the other, since it participates in what is, is by virtue of that very participation, yet is not that in which it participates, but other, and since it is other than what is, it is most obviously of necessity not what is."[358] Or, as he puts it at 257b "When we state what is not, it seems, we do not state something contrary to what is, but only something other." In other words, what is not *is not* what is not. Or, "what is not" of the Visitor's search is *the other* within what is, and not that which is contrary to being.

As I make explicit in Chapter 1, Parmenides does indeed admit the other into what is by admitting that the *is* is said of absolutely everything. And including the other into oneself, as Plato rightly understands, is not a contradiction, but rather an absolute necessity. The other is not the negation of what is. However, it is quite easy to get utterly confused around these negations and double negations. And, just as the goddess suggests, it is better to stay away from this area. However, Plato shows us that in a situation when we are confronted with the mortal who thinks that he knows whereas in fact he does not, it is absolutely necessary for the sophist to "step in" and confuse the hell out of this presumptuous mortal. It is, as the goddess suggests, a dangerous ground to trade on, but, as Plato shows with such ingenuity, even if we really try to introduce "actual" non-being into what is, we will wind up only further confirming being, and thus only corroborating the words of Parmenides. As Goethe says so eloquently, Mephistopheles is

> Part of that force which would

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[355] Plato, *Sophist*, 256d-e.

[356] *Ibid*., 258d.

[357] *Ibid*., 258c.

[358] *Ibid*., 259a.

Do evil evermore, and yet creates the good.[359]

Thus, to summarize the first reason for why the sophist is necessary, we can say the following. Because the sophist distinguishes or disrupts, he is able to (1) confuse the mortal and therefore put him or her in a situation from which he or she can actualize his or her philosophical aspect, and also (2) show the philosopher the difference between her and the mortal, as well as the difference between her and himself, and therefore enable the philosopher to re-create the world.

The second main reason for the sophist's indispensability has to do with epistemological considerations.

Let me begin with a passage from the *Republic* where Socrates foreshadows what I will be discussing here.

> You will no longer be able to follow, my dear Glaucon, I said, although there wouldn't be any lack of eagerness on my part. But you would no longer be seeing an image of what we are saying, but rather the truth itself, at least as it looks to me. Whether it is really so or not can no longer be properly insisted on. But that there is some such thing to see *must* be insisted on.[360]

Several pages earlier Socrates recounted the famous Allegory of the Cave, and now he is explaining to Glaucon how one comes to the "very end of the intelligible realm."[361] Socrates claims that the philosopher cannot "properly insist" or justify that what she is seeing in this realm is truth. But that there is truth, claims Socrates, "must be insisted on." And I might add, must be insisted on with the aid of the sophist.

The sophist does not know, although he appears to know. That is, the sophist knows how to create the appearance of knowledge, or how to justify the beliefs of the mortals. To really know is to be thinking philosophically—thinking-being—which means that errors or falsehoods are impossible within the philosophical thought proper. The errors only emerge with the articulations of this philosophical thought, or, to draw a parallel with the already mentioned Allegory of the Cave, the errors start popping up when the philosopher heads back to the cave, and they become especially numerous when she attempts to engage with the prisoners. It is the sophist who makes the philosopher doubt, or exposes her errors. But the sophist is also the one who forces the philosopher to look for certainty, or to make her ideas objectively valid. That is why, for example, we need the Visitor to become a sophist if we want to confirm the truth of Parmenides' logos. So, the sophist brings in doubt, but also allows for certainty, and in particular the kind of certainty that the mortal needs, that is, the kind of justification that gives us "objectivity." Let's look at this double-edged epistemological sword of the sophist more closely.

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[359] Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe. *Faust*. Tr. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Anchor Books, 1990, p. 159.

[360] Plato, *Republic* (tr. Bloom), 533a, emphasis added.

[361] *Ibid.*, 532a.

Let's consider the philosopher as such. She thinks being. The first moment of this thinking is a philosophical intuition, which can be thought out in a number of ways. The philosopher, seeing everybody else as the philosopher, thinks out her intuition as though she was talking to herself as the one who has this intuition. In other words, the philosopher's conversation is a conversation with herself, and her thinking out of intuition is a development internal to that intuition. Now, such an internal development is quite sufficient if we know that this inside has no outside, that the other is, first of all, in us. However, such understanding is possible only once the sophist has been included into the philosopher, and the mortal has become the philosopher. But before this occurs the philosopher in thinking out her intuition is prone to the dangers of solipsistic thinking. Hence we get an image of the philosopher who, while thinking being, falls into a well—for her the appearances are not worth noticing. In being the place for philosophical thought she stops paying attention to the sequences of the timeline—they simply do not exist for her. Moreover, what she has to say regarding being makes no sense to the mortal, and especially insofar as she cannot justify her claims in the way the mortal wants them justified: the philosopher's claims are not supported by "good reasons," they have no scientific backup, and in addition she is not concerned about making them appealing. As I have pointed out before, it is the sophist who makes the philosopher aware of the mortal and his needs. It is also the sophist who enables the philosopher to justify an intuition well, i.e. to distinguish between knowing and not knowing, and also give a certain kind of objectivity—the supple objectivity—to what she knows.

Since the sophist is the one who destroys—or at least tries to do so—he attacks the mortal by confusing him, as well as the philosopher, by making her doubt. As soon as a doubt enters the philosopher loses her intuition, and is forced to look for certainty.[362] Sophistry is the possibility of doubting, but also the possibility of being certain about what we do know.[363] So, as a consequence, the sophist forces the mortal to think philosophically, and the philosopher to take seriously the realm of appearances. The sophist, then, is the one who positions himself in-between the philosopher and the mortal, and filters the knowledge that cannot be justified into the seemly or objective opinions.

In order to understand what I mean by the supple objectivity, as well as clarify the way in which the sophist can help the philosopher to make the truth effective, let's use as our paradigm the relationship of the author and the critic to the text, since the articulation of the philosophical thought is a particular instance of this relationship. Within our standard (Western) understanding of the process of writing the author is the position that symbolizes the complete lack of critical distance between the human being and the text. The author is in the inside of the text, so to speak. The critic, on the other hand, is the position that is completely disengaged form the text. It represents the view from the outside. If the author has a subjective perspective on the text, or, better, has no perspective at all, then from the author's position the text cannot be assessed in any way that does not immediately invalidate itself. It is evident that such a subjective position necessarily results in solipsism. The position of the critic, on the other hand, yields a

[362] That is why Descartes looked for something which is indubitable (cf. Chapter 3).

[363] At this point we encounter the connection with Descartes, on which I will elaborate in the next, third chapter of this work.

perfectly "objective" view. As an outsider, the critic does not have any prejudices that may skew his or her understanding of the text. However, as we very well know, a completely objective stance is simply not possible. An attempt to maintain such supposed "objectivity" underlies all forms of imperialism, and promotes relativism as a reaction to imperialism.

It is evident that instead of the two separate ways of approaching the text—that of the author and that of the critic—we need only one position, that of the author/critic. The result of the oneness between the author and the critic will be the way of relating to the text from the inside that does not have an outside. Under such a conception, every author is also a critic, and every critic—an author. Thus, our criterion of evaluation of a given text becomes internal to the process of writing/reading, or to the process of enacting the text.[364] This criterion is the degree of transformative potential of the text, or the degree to which a text is able to re-create the world according to the natural articulations.[365] However, this does not mean that the critic who is thus incorporated into transformative writing is reduced or erased. The critic remains himself, i.e. the agitator whose input is unsettling, uncomfortable, even destructive.

The sophist is, of course, this critic who can help the work of the philosopher by pointing out the weaknesses of the articulated thought. The sophist is also able to contrast or distinguish the philosopher's work from other kinds of work, but also from other philosophical articulations. In this sense the sophist is able to give objectivity, even if always only provisional, to the articulations of the philosopher. For example, the sophist is able to say that this text is more (philosophically) provocative than the other one.

If the sophist is the critic who evaluates philosophical thought, then the mortal puts this thought in a context. That is, the mortal "grounds" this thought in appearances, he or she sees in the eternal philosophical thought a particular configuration of features. Thus we can say, that the mortal gives the philosopher "a human face." If the mortal influence is too great, then the philosophical thought threatens to lose all its philosophical qualities or even actually loses them. For example, the fact that Nietzsche was very ill at the end of his life in the eyes of the mortal, or considered only in this respect as Nietzsche's madness, undermines anything he ever wrote. The sophist, then, is necessary to restrain the mortal, or to destroy such a mortal understanding.

On the other hand, the sophist gives objectivity to what the philosopher is doing. The oneness of sophistry and philosophy results in the creation of an always tentative and yet, nevertheless, objective hierarchical scale, or a criterion according to which we, for instance, we would be able to assert that Deleuze understands Nietzsche better than an unsympathetic reader, and the representatives of the neo-Nazi movement misunderstand Nietzsche completely. In other words, sophistry gives objectivity to what otherwise would appear as an "insider" perspective only. Sophistry enables us to say that Plato is a

[364] Every act of engagement with a given text is an act of its re-creation. In speaking of such re-creation as enactment I am drawing on the work of Gloria Anzaldúa in her book *Borderlands/*La Frontera, especially on the chapter entitled "Tlilli, Tlapalli/ The Path of the Red and Black Ink."

[365] This idea will receive further elaboration in the Conclusion.

philosopher, and his work is more philosophically provocative than that of Stephen King. Without the sophist I would never be able to assert that Plato is a philosopher, or never be able to gain any kind of perspective on (my) philosophical thought.

Yet this objectivity is flexible since it is always open to a possibility that any given text or appearance can lead to a philosophical insight. Because the sophist is aware that the appearances are just that, the appearances, because the sophist left to himself induces relativism, because the sophist introduces doubt—because of all of this, the sophist prevents the philosopher from being dogmatic. Since the sophist constantly attempts to destroy the philosopher's articulation he also prevents the philosopher from letting her thought ossify. What exactly does this mean?

The mortal does not have a criterion or a standard other than the appearances themselves, and when he or she uses such a standard he or she is not able to understand its status, i.e. that this standard is as a contrived or a fabricated one. The philosopher, of course, has a standard, and that standard is truth or the *is*. But such a standard cannot be scientifically or objectively confirmed or established. The sophist's criterion is non-being (or, in other words, he does not have one), because he realizes that any standard at the level of appearances is itself an appearance of a standard, and so, his intention is to disrupt all hierarchies, creating a semblance of non-being.[366] But because he is able to destroy the appearances so well, he also knows how to give objectivity to a contrived standard: realizing that any criterion is just an appearance he is also able to make a given criterion seemly. The philosopher thus needs this skill in order to give her thought "external" or "objective" grounding. If this sort of collaboration between the philosopher and the sophist takes place, we get a hierarchy that is flexible or objectivity that is supple.[367] In other words, the sophist can make the philosopher's standard flexible, or adjust it to the appearances, so that as a result we get a fabricated standard that is true.[368] So, the philosopher unified with the sophist understands that any criterion articulated by her is only a guideline, and yet, this guideline is a true one.

To sum up, the sophist enables the philosopher to know that and when she does not know. So, the sophist is like a guard that establishes himself in-between the philosopher and the mortal, who separates knowledge that cannot be justified from the

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[366] The philosopher's standard, of course, is inaccessible to the sophist because he is the one who does not know (the truth).

[367] At this point Chapter 76 from Lao-Tzu's *Tao Teh Ching* comes to mind:
When a man is living, he is soft and supple.
When he is dead, he becomes hard and rigid.
When a plant is living, it is soft and tender.
When it is dead, it becomes withered and dry.
Hence, the hard and rigid belongs to the company of the dead:
The soft and supple belongs to the company of the living.
Therefore a mighty army tends to fall by its own weight,
Just as dry wood is ready for the axe.
The might and great will be laid low;
The humble and weak will be exalted.
From *Tao Teh Ching*. Tr. John C. H. Wu. Boston: Shambhala, 2006, p. 171.

[368] The concept of the fabrication of the world receives elaboration in the last chapter on Deleuze.

opinions that require scientific or technical justification. And even more importantly, the sophist is necessary to enable the creation of a flexible hierarchy out of non-hierarchical truth thought by the philosopher.

This last point leads me to the third reason for why the inclusion of the sophist is necessary. This reason is closely tied with the philosopher's task of re-creating the world—the act that requires the joint activity of the philosopher and the sophist.

The process of articulating the philosophical intuition is the process of reconciling the appearances with being, or recreating the order or the arrangement of the appearances according to thinking-being. A completed articulation is a result of thinking out intuition, and as such is solidified in a certain form, or appears in a concrete way. As we began seeing, in order to affect the mortal this form or appearance needs to be seemly, and for this an art is necessary.

But the philosopher in the most precise sense does not have an art or a τέχνη if by it we understand the skilled activity that yields a product, i.e. if by τέχνη we mean the art that enables us to *do* things, and thus distinguishes us from others by means of works or ἔργα. The reason for this, of course, is that the philosopher and her activity is not subject to causal laws, and therefore in her case it is not possible to speak of products and deeds. To use the imagery of the Allegory of the Cave, the philosopher does not have an art of communicating with the prisoners in the cave, or to use the terminology of the *Republic* more generally, the philosopher not only doesn't have an interest in ruling, but she will not be a good ruler—the philosopher qua philosopher sees only being. Yet, as Plato points out, she is the most capable one to rule, precisely because she thinks being, and knows the truth. This is, perhaps, one of the greatest paradoxes of philosophy: it is the most useful and simultaneously the most useless activity. Can this paradox be resolved? In the *Republic* Plato claims that the philosopher is most "exalted" if she rules in the πόλις, i.e. if she is able to shape or influence the way in which the human being lives.

> Well, he [Glaucon] said, he [the philosopher] would leave having accomplished not the least of things.—But not the greatest either, I said, if he didn't chance upon a suitably constituted polis. For in a suitable one he himself will be more exalted and save the common things along with the private.[369]

How are we to resolve this impasse: the philosopher cannot rule, at least not until there is a "suitably constituted polis," and, as we know, to establish such a polis the philosopher already needs to be the ruler, and yet, the philosopher has to rule in order to actualize her philosophical aspect more fully? The solution rests in the fact that the sophist needs to be included into the philosopher, or, better, the human being in whom the philosophical aspect dominates needs to acknowledge and develop her sophistical aspect as well. So, the philosopher can master the art of recreating the world by including the sophist into herself. I would like to stress once again that such inclusion of the philosopher's other in no way reduces the difference between them. As you might recall, this difference consists in the difference of engagement: the philosopher creates or

[369] Plato, *Republic* (tr. Bloom), 497a, translation adjusted by me (translating αὐξήσεται as "exalted").

unifies by engaging with being, and the sophist tries to disengage from being, and thus attempts to destroy or to separate.

So, what exactly is this art of ruling, or the art of recreating the world? It is the art of manipulating mortal opinions effectively. It is the art of walking the third way of the *Poem*, the way that keeps turning back on itself. But it is also the art that involves knowing that only the first way is. In other words, it is the art of influencing the appearances according to being. It is the art of being able to doubt *and* be certain, to be objective *and* non-dogmatic. This is the reason for why the third way of the *Poem* is called the backward-turning one: it is creative and destructive at the same time.

The art of recreating the world is also the art of imposing constraints on being. As Plato says through Socrates, "it's not the concern of law that any one class in the city fare exceptionally well, but it contrives to bring this about for the whole polis, harmonizing the citizens by persuasion and constraint [ἀνάγκῃ] …"[370] At this point we notice a striking connection with Parmenides' *Poem*. In it the goddess also speaks of constraints. Being, insofar as it is whole, is "quiescent in the bonds of great restraints,"[371] and not unfinished because "mighty Constraint holds it in the restraints of a bond which enfolds it all about."[372] And in Pathmark 3 thinking just like time is said to be *not* "something other outside of being, since Fate has shackled it whole and quiescent to be."[373] The language of constraints refers the oneness of being and the appearances, but also to that of thinking and being. For if being were unbound or infinite there would be no way to think it. Thus, the appearances are necessary to think being, and the art of the exalted philosopher needs to be both effective and based on truth. In other words, only when this art is practiced with knowledge will it cease being mere manipulation, and turn into an effective recreation of the world. But for this we need both—the philosopher and the sophist.

So the philosopher's ultimate task is to re-order the world, or to impose a set of constraints on it, but for this the sophist's help is absolutely crucial, that is, the philosopher needs to become unified with her other—the sophist.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the dialogue Socrates asserts that the philosopher because of the ignorance of "everybody else"—the mortal—takes on the appearances of the sophist,

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[370] *Ibid.*, 519e, translation adjusted by me (translating ἀνάγκῃ as constraint).

[371] Parmenides, *Poem*, B8, line 26, correcting what the author identifies as a typographical error: "restrains."

[372] *Ibid.*, B8, lines 30-31.

[373] *Ibid.*, B8, lines 37-38.

or of the statesman.[374] And he then asks the Visitor: "Did they [Parmenides and his school] customarily take all these to be one or two, or, just as there are three names, did they also distinguish three kinds and ascribe a kind to each name individually?"[375] To which the Visitor replies: "They believed them to be three."[376] What is interesting about this exchange in light of my analysis is that the Visitor, speaking for Parmenides, claims that the philosopher and the sophist are two separate entities.[377] Whereas Socrates claims that the philosopher *appears* to be the sophist, i.e. at the level of appearances they are often one. As I have been arguing, through the characters of his dialogue Plato is here not only referring to the mortal inability to distinguish the two, but also pointing to the exalted philosopher who became unified with the sophist, and therefore mastered the art of sophistry.

But, of course, there is always the danger of the sophist turning against the philosopher, or of suppressing the philosopher. Just as there is the danger of the philosopher killing the sophist. Thus, the one of the two is quite unstable, and needs to be constantly sustained or "kept up." Such instability is, of course, brought about by the sophist and his drive for destruction.[378] However this risk is also a guarantor of the constant flexibility of the philosopher and her reformulations of the world. For the oneness of the philosopher and the sophist is a *dynamic* one, since it does not happen once and for all, but rather only in the now that needs to be re-actualized again and again. That is, curiously enough, the sophist is necessary to prevent the philosopher from becoming the mortal who clings dogmatically to inflexible hierarchies and also from becoming the sophist through excluding or killing this other to herself.[379] If the

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[374] *Plato's* Sophist, 216c-d.

[375] *Ibid.*, 217a.

[376] *Ibid.*, 217b. In his commentary on the *Sophist* Seth Benardete argues that the Visitor's reply is at odds with Socrates' conviction that the philosopher, the sophist, and the statesman are one. As, I hope, it is clear from this chapter I find such a conclusion to be rather shortsighted. Cf. *Plato's Sophist*. *Part II of* The Being of the Beautiful. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, p. 73-74.

[377] Again, I am leaving the statesman out of my discussion.

[378] Even though developing this point is beyond the scope of this work I want to point out that the sophist in Freudian terminology stands for the death drive, whereas the philosopher represents the power of Eros. However, as Russian psychoanalyst Sabina Spielrein argued in her 1911 essay entitled "Destruction as a Cause of Becoming," arguably taking us a step further than Freud in his theories, Eros ultimately unites in itself both a creative and destructive force, i.e. both love and death.

[379] Alain Badiou in his *Manifesto for Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999) is concerned with the same issues, only his way of responding to it is very different. Badiou argues that the philosopher needs to take up the position of the "reserve regarding its sophistical double" (p. 144). But it is not the restraint of the philosopher's desire to destroy that is necessary, since such desire is actually a sophistic desire. The philosopher, on the other hand, never wants to dispense with the sophist, because she doesn't even see the sophist as such, except in the instance when the sophist has taught her to see him. In that case there is indeed the temptation to destroy. So, at the moment when the question of incorporation of the sophist comes up, i.e. after the sophist has shown the philosopher the difference, then the philosopher is tempted to kill. But such an act can only result in the philosopher's metamorphosis into the sophist.

philosopher unifies, the sophist distinguishes or differentiates, and both are necessary for bringing about change in the world.

As I argued in this chapter, philosophy's proper place is an aspect of the human being in which the oneness of thinking and being is actualized, i.e. the philosopher. However, in order to articulate this thought, and thus to be able to alter a present configuration of the appearances, the philosopher needs to recognize and admit her other, that is, the sophist. Only with the help of the sophistical art will the philosopher be able to effectively speak to the mortal in herself and in others.

And a final note about the dialogue. It is designed in such a way that only through our own effort of thinking does this truth come to the surface. This is, of course, the genius of Plato who is in this respect very much like Heraclitus: he does not speak openly, and yet he does not try to conceal anything either—since both of these ways are, in fact, impossible—but rather, he shows, or gestures towards a truth. Remember the Heraclitus' saying: "The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither indicates clearly nor conceals but gives a sign."[380] It seems to me that Plato understood very well something that has also been a part of Heraclitean thought, namely, that apart from being able to convey the direct, literal messages, words can function as the riddles that need to be worked on to be understood. This latter kind of meaning is, of course, much more significant for our own being as thinkers, for they provide us with the space to philosophize, they create for us an interval for thinking. Plato constructs this interval called "*The Sophist,*" but it is only we who can turn this text into philosophy by, among other things, suspending the great authority of Plato.

[380] Heraclitus, Fragment 93. Translated by Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 43.

Chapter 3

Descartes's Now

> What impels thinking and demands it (and in the course of our discussions we will understand why) is Descartes himself, his image, his persona.
>
> —Mamardashvili, *Cartesian Reflections*[381]

In the Introduction I argued that there are at least two different ways to understand (Western) metaphysics: what I called the historiographic notion and originary metaphysics. As you recall, with the historiographic metaphysics we conceive the history of philosophy as a progression of theories that developed as a result of shortcomings or imperfections of those that preceded them, and thus a theory turns out to be merely a record of a thought that occurred at some past time. It is possible, though, to consider a position developed by, say, Kant or Descartes as a possibility for our own engagement with a thought, i.e. as thinking that is happening now. It is an approach that relies on this presupposition that I called originary metaphysics.

In this chapter I will continue discussing the distinction between the two notions of metaphysics, this time articulating it through the problematic of philosophy's relationship to its own history and a converging issue of the philosopher's relationship to the philosophical tradition. In the second chapter I already approached an aspect of this relationship when exploring the idea of the Visitor's necessary violence towards Parmenides, or, as it eventually turned out, towards the mortal (mis)understanding of Parmenides. In this chapter I will focus on the philosophical persona of Descartes, thereby turning to a particular instance of philosophizing where the distinction comes to the fore.

But what exactly do I mean by the philosophical persona?[382] Answering this question will also help me explore the reasons for which I chose to focus on Descartes and his work, as opposed to some other philosopher.

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[381] *Мераб Мамардашвили. Картезианские размышления*. Москва: «Культура», 1993, p. 7. This quotation, as well as several others throughout the chapter are taken from a course of lectures on Descartes that were given in 1981 by the Georgian philosopher Merab Mamardashvili. The lectures were published in a book entitled *Cartesian Reflections*. This book has not yet been translated into English, although there is a French version of it (M. K. Mamardachvili. *Méditations cartésiennes*. [Arles]: Actes Sud, 1997). All the quotations from Mamardashvili's work that appear in this text have been translated by me.
From the very outset I want to acknowledge that in my thinking about Descartes and his work I am greatly influenced by the writings of Mamardashvili.

[382] I would like to point out right away that I am not making any allusions to C. G. Jung and the way in which he uses this term, for instance, to mean one's typical character.

In the previous chapter I distinguished three aspects of the human being—the philosopher, the sophist, and the mortal. I argued that all three are present in any human being,[383] although some might be more or less suppressed or silenced. I briefly explored the fact that Plato is a configuration of the sophist-philosopher-mortal.[384] The philosophical aspect, as you recall, appears second in Plato because it is only through our own effort of philosophizing that we can make Plato a philosopher. I argued that Plato structures his dialogues as a sophist, i.e. first striving to disabuse his readers of their mortal aspect. Plato's mortal aspect —the particular circumstances of his life and his personality—is least known to us, and that is why his mortal aspect is the least explicit one.

In this chapter I will consider Descartes in terms of such a configuration of the three aspects and the interrelationships between them. This means that I will occasionally make use of the historical information about Descartes's life. Such historical facts will be mainly derived either from his philosophical writings or his correspondence. Yet, this study will be by no means biographical in nature. My primary interest lies with Descartes's thought, and as my goal is to understand Descartes insofar as he is a philosopher, it is for this purpose that I will examine the philosophical concepts created by him. However, such an analysis will have to involve consideration of Descartes the mortal and Descartes the sophist.

So, the aim of this chapter is to understand a particular human being at a specific point in time and in a definite geographical place who thought being, or philosophized. In other words, I want to explore a specific place at which eternity interrupts the timeline or where, as I will proceed to show, Descartes the philosopher becomes unified with Descartes the mortal through the extreme (philosophical) effort of holding in mind or remembering up (ἀναμιμνήσκω) an intuition.

Thus, in this chapter the notion of memory will come to the foreground, since the historiographic understanding of metaphysics runs parallel to the conception of memory as a process of amassing and retrieving stored information. Whereas originary metaphysics is tied to the philosopher's effort to remember or keep in mind the intuition that is always new. So, this chapter can also be understood as an elucidation of philosophy's relationship to its own history according to two different ways of understanding memory.

So, in this chapter I will show that Descartes articulates this distinction as the distinction between the body and the mind unified with the body. The latter kind of memory is especially prominent in his final work *The Passions of the Soul*.

In order to do this, though, I will first have to consider the both famous and infamous distinction between the mind and the body. I will argue that rather than differentiating between two substances in the ordinary, Scholastic sense of this term, by it Descartes refers to the two different ways of approaching the world: the philosopher's way that focuses only on being, and the scientific way of considering the appearances.

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[383] As, I think, it has been clear from the preceding chapters, I am focusing on Western metaphysics, as well as Western human being, although at least certain aspects of my analysis could be extended to other civilizations.

[384] Cf. the end of the second section of Chapter 2.

First of all, Descartes in an important sense is a model of a revolutionary thinker. Much more so, I would venture to say, than Marx is, for Descartes changes the direction not only of philosophy, but, more generally, of the Western way of inquiry. of philosophy's demarche like nobody else before or even perhaps after. Yet, paradoxically, he also remains fully embedded in the philosophical tradition and continues it.

This being said, the question might still arise as to why I chose to explore these ideas through Descartes's writings, and not the writings of some other thinker. There are several reasons for this.

Descartes is significant for my project because of a certain resonance between his particular historical situation and our own, namely Scholasticism. For philosophy of our own age has certain tendencies that bear a striking resemblance to Scholasticism, such as the current status of philosophy as a discipline among the other disciplines, as well as the professionalisation of the field. Thus, just like Descartes we need to break with the tradition, and to take responsibility for our own thinking. But also, like Descartes, we need to continue and transmit this tradition.

Of course, in a sense every philosopher can be seen as doing just that: rupturing with but also maintaining the tradition, and, in fact, this is exactly the point of this chapter. Yet, Descartes's example is especially vivid, i.e. his particular circumstances make his into a seemly appearance, to use the jargon of the Parmenidean goddess. Consider, for instance, Descartes's resolution to "seek no knowledge other than that which could be found in myself or else in the great book of the world."[385]

This assertion leads to another reason for focusing on Descartes. By engaging with his writings we find the numerous passages through which it becomes clear that in being the philosopher Descartes is able to communicate with his own mortal. Or, put differently, his philosophical writings and his everyday life form a unity that I call his persona. In the case of Descartes there is no disconnection between theory and practice.

Moreover, insofar as this project is concerned, Descartes stands out among other thinkers for yet another reason: the most extraordinary intersection exists between his thought and that of Parmenides.

As I argue in the first chapter, Parmenides begins—both his *Poem* and philosophy—with the act of intuition. It is well-known that intuition plays the most important role in how Descartes conceives thinking, and in what follows I will explore the manner in which it is connected to his notion of the understanding. In addition, I will consider the sense in which Descartes's "I think, therefore I am" has profound resonances with the Parmenidean "the same is to think as well as to be."[386] Yet another point of

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[385] *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. Volume I. Tr. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdoch. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997, p. 115. Henceforth I will refer to this volume as CSM I, p. 115. I will refer to the second volume (*The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. Volume II. Tr. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdoch. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) as CSM II. Finally, I will use the abbreviation CSMK for *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. Volume III: The correspondence. Tr. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch and Anthony Kenny. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.

[386] Cf. Parmenides, *Poem*, B3.

convergence between these philosophers is their treatment of philosophical activity as something that is not limited to rationality.[387]

Thus, this chapter will motion back to the ideas developed in the first one on Parmenides, continue the discussion of the three aspects of the human being from the second one on the *Sophist*, and elaborate the distinction between two kinds of metaphysics formulated in the Introduction: with Descartes we will see in what sense the historical circumstances are both inessential and indispensable for philosophy.[388]

The Problematic Distinction

Descartes makes the famous distinction—perhaps the most famous or the most consequential one in the history of philosophy—between the mind and the body. In this section I will argue that by this distinction Descartes means two different ways of relating to being; consequently the traditional criticism of Cartesianism is too often misplaced, since the mind and the body are not two substances in the ordinary, or Scholastic sense of this term.[389] In addition, upon closer look the distinction will turn out to be threefold.

But let's first establish its two terms. As I will show, the mind/body distinction maps on to the other two distinctions that Descartes makes separating intuition from deduction, and "pure" understanding[390] from imagination. In other words, I will explore

[387] Moreover, what I called in the first chapter the mystical character of Parmenides' work is echoed in Descartes: for Parmenides the practice of incubation, i.e. of entering the state between waking and sleeping, is that which allows him to philosophize, whereas Descartes asserts that he needs to spend most of his time sleeping and resting in order to be able to philosophize several hours per year. Descartes's lifetime of philosophical study is prompted by the three dreams that he has in the course of one night. Parmenides writes down his visions in hexameter. Descartes suggests that his work ought to be approached as a fable: in his Preface to the *Principles of Philosophy*—the book intended to replace the textbooks of the Schools—Descartes recommends to treat his book as a novel, at least at first: "I should like the reader first of all to go quickly through the book like a novel." (CSM I, p. 185). His *Discourse on Method* ought to be read as a history, or a fable for "if read with discretion, fables and histories help to form one's judgment" (CSM I, p. 113).

[388] I recognize that this chapter more than any other part of this work is in many ways a preparation for a much more extensive study, since an in-depth articulations of the claims made here would require a separate dissertation. Yet, it does enable me to fulfill the limited goals of the current project.

[389] In fact, one of the official reasons for Descartes's condemnation culminating in 1663 with his writings being put by the censors of the Catholic Church on the *Index of Prohibited Books* was his notion of the substance. Article 51 in Descartes's *Principles of Philosophy*, which I will quote in a moment, was specifically criticized. Cf. Roger Ariew. *Descartes and the Scholastics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999, esp. p. 158 and ff.

[390] In this work I will be translating the French *entendement* with the English "understanding" and not "intellect" as it is being regularly translated in the Cottingham edition of Descartes's writings.

how from these three different angles Descartes is trying to articulate the two diverging ways of approaching the world.

The following quotation from Descartes's letter to princess Elizabeth will serve as an entryway into Descartes's protean distinction:

> I can say with truth that the chief rule I have always observed in my studies, which I think has been the most useful to me in acquiring what knowledge I have, has been never to spend more than a few hours a day in the thoughts which occupy the imagination and a few hours a year on those which occupy understanding alone [*l'entendement seul*]. I have given all the rest of my time to the relaxation of the senses and the repose of the mind. And I include among the exercise of the imagination all serious conversations and anything which needs to be done with attention.[391]

Why am I opening the chapter with this particular remark?[392] I chose this passage because in it we encounter a distinction which is going to resurface again and again in Descartes's work, a distinction which will constitute the crux of my argument in this section. For in the passage above Descartes differentiates between two kinds of thinking: what he calls understanding alone—or pure understanding, as he occasionally puts it—and imagination.

In addition, in this passage Descartes admits that he thinks by means of understanding only several hours per year, pointing to the uncanny or uncommon character of thinking. What a striking assertion, especially considering that in the *Discourse on Method* Descartes claims that "what we properly call 'good sense' or 'reason' is naturally equal in all men."[393] Looking forward to the Conclusion in which I examine Gilles Deleuze's response to the history of philosophy it is interesting to consider the following quotation from his *Difference and Repetition*: "'Everybody' knows very well that in fact men think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking."[394] As is clear from the larger context in which we encounter this sentence, with "everybody" Deleuze—with a rather critical gesture—is motioning towards Descartes, and more specifically to the *Discourse*. However, as we see from the letter to Princess Elizabeth, Descartes only too well realizes the rarity of thinking, and in the *Discourse* claims that having a thought is not by no means as extraordinary as being able to "attend" to this thought.[395] In the second section

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[391] To Elizabeth, June 28, 1643. In *Descartes: Philosophical Letters*. Tr. Anthony Kenny. London: Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 141-142, translation adjusted by me.

[392] Undoubtedly, having the authority of Descartes himself behind me I now feel much more assured that if my dissertation is not as philosophically profound as it could be than it's only because I haven't had enough years to engage my pure understanding.

[393] CSM I, p. 111.

[394] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p.132.

[395] CSM I, p. 111.

of this chapter this idea will become especially prominent. For now, however, let's return to the distinction.

There is, thus, the uncommon understanding on the one hand, and on the other, thinking that involves imagination—a much more common kind of thought. How exactly do the understanding and the imagination map onto the distinction between the mind and the body? In the same letter to Elizabeth Descartes continues:

> I observe one great difference between these three kinds of notions. The soul can be conceived [*conçoit*] only by pure understanding [*l'enetendement pur*]; the body (i.e. extension, shape, and movement) can likewise be known [*connaître*] by understanding alone [*l'entendement seul*], but much better by understanding aided by imagination; and finally what belongs to the union of the soul and the body is known [*connaissent*] only obscurely by the understanding alone or even by the understanding aided by the imagination, but it is known very clearly by the senses. That is why people who never philosophize and use only their senses have no doubt that the soul moves the body and that the body acts on the soul. They regard both of them as a single thing, that is to say, they conceive their union; because to conceive the union between two things is to conceive them as one single thing. Metaphysical thoughts, which exercise the pure understanding, help to familiarize us with the notion of the soul; and the study of mathematics, which exercises mainly the imagination in the consideration of shapes and movements, accustoms us to form distinct notions of bodies. But it is in using the ordinary life and in ordinary conversations, and in abstaining from meditation and from the study of things which exercise the imagination, that one learns to conceive the union of the soul and the body.[396]

As we begin seeing already, a threefold distinction and not merely a dichotomy is at work here: the mind,[397] the body, and the union of the two. It is interesting to note that here Descartes refers to all three of the terms as notions, which is an indication of the fact that the mind and the body are not substances in the traditional sense of this term. It is true that occasionally—for instance in his reply to the fourth set of objections to the *Meditations*—Descartes acknowledges that the thinking thing is a substance, and uses this to argue that the mind is thus necessarily distinct from the body. He even clarifies there that by "substance" he means that which "can exist by itself, that is without the aid of any other substance." [398] However, in the *Principles* he writes:

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[396] CSMK, p. 226-227, translation adjusted by me and based on René Descartes. *Correspondance avec Elizabeth et autres letters*. Paris: Flammarion, 1989, p. 73-74.

[397] In the above passage Descartes actually uses the word soul or *l'âme*, whereas in most other places in the French texts *l'esprit* is used by him—the word that has been commonly translated either "the soul" or "the mind." In this chapter I will confine myself to the English "mind" unless quoting a translation that uses this term. I am convinced that in Descartes's theory the two were interchangeable.

[398] Cf. CSM II, p. 159.

> By *substance* we can understand nothing other than a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence. And there is only one substance which can be understood to depend on no other thing whatsoever, namely God. In the case of all other substances, we perceive that they can exist only with the help of God's concurrence. Hence the term 'substance' does not apply *univocally*, as they say in Schools, to God and to other things…[399]

In other words, the mind and the body are not substances in the strict sense, even though in the following sections of the *Principles* Descartes proceeds to apply this term to them. Of course, Descartes's assertion that only God is a substance is a problematic one in itself, and unfortunately I will not be able to confront this issue here, although I do want to suggest the Descartes's God is not the Christian God. I will briefly return to this point at the end of this chapter. So, I would like to suggest that for Descartes the mind and the body are the two aspects of what is, namely what in the earlier chapters I called being and the appearances—the two aspects that are distinct and yet not independent of each other.

Consider the following passage from the *Regulae*: "…the power through which we know things in the strict sense is purely spiritual, and is no less distinct from the whole body than blood is distinct from bone, or the hand from the eye."[400]

Thus, the mind and the body are distinct but only in a certain sense, i.e. when considered on their own, or when the world is considered from one angle only. Here is a passage from Descartes's reply to the fourth set of objections to his *Meditations* that further clarifies this issue:

> Thus a hand is an incomplete substance when it is referred to the whole body of which it is a part; but it is a complete substance when it is considered on its own. And just the same way the mind and the body are incomplete substances when they are referred to a human being which together they make up. But if they are considered on their own, they are complete.[401]

Here Descartes points out that the mind and the body are "incomplete substances" in respect to the human being, i.e. to the unity that is the human being. Extending his analysis from the human being to what I have been calling the world or what is in Chapter 1, we can say that in respect to the oneness of what is the mind and the body are not really substances. However, as I will be arguing in what follows, when we actualize our philosophical aspect and focus only on being we exercise "the mind." In this act we are knowing the world in a complete way. The same is true when we embark a scientific attitude and consider the appearances only, that is, consider the world as a set of causal connections.

But returning to the letter to Elizabeth from 28th of June, 1643 quoted above, Descartes tells us that the notion "mind" is conceived by understanding alone. The

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[399] *Principles*, Part I, 51. CSM I, p. 210.

[400] Rule XII. CSM I, p. 42.

[401] CSM II, p. 157.

notion "body" is known best by imagination and understanding, but can be also known, though not as well, by understanding alone.

Let's look deeper into the distinction by inquiring into what imagination is and why the connection with it needs to be severed when we are conceiving the world as "mind."

In the Sixth Meditation Descartes gives us an example of using the imagination: "when I imagine a triangle, I do not merely understand that it is a figure bounded by three sides, but at the same time I also see the three lines with my mind's eye as if they were present before me."[402] Both John Cottingham and Merab Mamardashvili agree that imagination involves visualizing or picture-thinking, or, as Mamardashvili also puts it, psychologizing. Thus, Descartes concludes in one of his letters to Mersenne: "Whatever we conceive of without an image is an idea of the pure mind [*du pur esprit*], and whatever we conceive of with an image is an idea of the imagination."[403] To try to imagine something that can only be thought through understanding is to use the approach that is not appropriate and consequently to attribute to the object we are imagining qualities that don't belong to it. In the *Discourse* we find the following example of such misapplication: "as to the nature of this soul, either I did not think about this or else *imagined* it to be something tenuous, like a wind or fire or ether, which permeated my more solid parts."[404] But "none of the things that imagination enables me to grasp is at all relevant to the knowledge of myself which I possess" because "imagining is simply contemplating the shape or image of a corporeal thing."[405]

So, metaphorically speaking, "…when the mind understands, it in some way turns towards itself and inspects one of the ideas which are within it; but when it imagines, it turns towards the body and looks at something in the body which conforms to an idea understood by the mind or perceived by the senses."[406] I would like to emphasize the fact that here we are speaking metaphorically, so instead of understanding the above in terms of the distinction between the inside and the outside I suggest that we take it to mean two distinct, *almost* incompatible approaches: looking at the world in terms of being and looking at the world in terms of the appearances.

It is because of this distinction that Descartes calls imagination an "additional effort of mind."[407] But also because he thinks that the imagination is an additional step for the philosopher, since it does not constitute her as the philosopher, i.e. as the human being that thinks being. This is why Descartes claims that "the power of imagining which is in me, differing as it does from the power of understanding, is not a necessary constituent of my own essence, that is of the essence of the mind"[408] In other words,

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[402] *Ibid*., p. 50.

[403] To Mersenne, July 1641. GSMK, p. 186.

[404] CSM II, p. 17, emphasis added.

[405] *Ibid*., p. 19. In a moment we will delve into the idea that I am a thinking thing.

[406] *Ibid*., p. 51.

[407] *Ibid*.

[408] *Ibid*.

considered only in this respect, i.e. only insofar as I am the philosopher, imagination is not necessary, and, moreover, it is an obstacle. Why? Because imagination engages with the body or the appearances, and that's what Descartes means when he says that the mind turns towards the body when it imagines. Using imagination requires skill, or τέχνη. Since the philosopher's act of thinking does not involve skillfulness, the imaginations poses an obstacle for her. However, it is essential to keep in mind that Descartes is not claiming that imagination is not necessary or not essential for the human being. In fact, insofar as one is the scientist he or she cannot do without imagination. If you recall, in the Introduction I defined the scientist as the aspect of the human being that is concerned with beings or the appearances, and is not concerned with being or truth in itself. The scientist orders beings but not according to being that admits no fixed hierarchies, but according to the hierarchies developed by him or her, and therefore, more or less at random. Ultimately, the scientist needs the philosopher to order beings according to being.

In addition, as we will soon find out, Descartes too thinks that the philosopher essentially needs imagination, for it is that which allows her to reformulate the appearances, but only during the second step. However, the philosopher as such uses the understanding alone. But since for Descartes, just as for Parmenides, the philosopher's activity is first of all, or in its first moment, intuition, the understanding is not reducible to intellectual activity, as Cottingham, for instance, suggests, at least at the level of translation. Rather, by the understanding Descartes means an act of relating to what is from the side of being or the way of approaching the world that is other than causal, mechanistic, scientific. Whereas the imagination considers the appearances only. Yet, since being and the appearances are one, the understanding and the imagination are just two different ways of approaching this one. And when these approaches are combined the philosopher is able to recut or recreate the world. Yet before this can happen the imagination has to be destroyed by the sophist in order to allow for the new philosophical intuition.

But before we approach this issue let us consider how the understanding is different from thinking. In the *Meditations* Descartes claims that I as thinking am "a mind, or intelligence, or intellect, or reason [mens, sive animus, sive intellectus, sive ratio]"[409] and a paragraph later asserts I am that which "doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, and also imagines and feels [dubitans, intelligens, affirmans, negans, volens, nolens, imaginans quoque, & sentiens]."[410] In other words, thinking includes the pure understanding (the domain of the philosopher), the understanding and the imagination (the domain of the exalted philosopher), doubting (the sophist) and feeling (the mortal). But in order to think about thinking only the pure understanding can be used:

> Commonly when people talk of an extended being, they mean something imaginable. In this being—I leave on the side the question whether it is conceptual or real—they can distinguish by the imagination various parts of

[409] *Ibid*., p. 18.

[410] *Ibid*., p. 19, translation adjusted upon the recommendation from David Allison.

> determinate size and shape, each non-identical with the others…. Nothing of this kind can be said about God or about our mind; they cannot be apprehended by the imagination, but only by the understanding...[411]

As I mentioned earlier, we can approach the world in two very different ways: the first one—the way of imagination--explains the world in a mechanistic way, i.e. the causal explanation becomes predominant since the appearances and the connections among them are considered. This is the core of the scientific framework—the dominant way in which the world has been understood in the West in the last several centuries, and thus the most comprehensible manner of understanding the world to the mortal of our times. Descartes's thought is often reduced to such a scientific or mechanistic conception of the world, the human being, the animal, whereas in actuality Descartes's objective is to hold the scientific and the philosophical approach together.

Most misunderstandings of Descartes are founded on the claims such as the one asserted by Cottingham in *A Descartes Dictionary*: "a purely cognitive faculty which could operate in the absence of any physical substrate."[412] Apart from the connotation of the term "cognitive" which is inappropriate in the context of the distinction between imagination and understanding, since this term overemphasizes the role of the intellect, there is a more basic problem with the assertion. For Descartes is not claiming that understanding could operate without the body in the sense of my particular physical body, but rather that we cannot understand the understanding, or engage the understanding—and in this case these two come to the same, since in order to do the first we have to do the second—unless we stop relying on a certain kind of thinking—picture thinking. Instead, Descartes says that we cannot explain the understanding and its acts in terms of our bodily functions or psychological states, whereas the imagination allows us to do just that, since with the imagination we are engaged at the level of scientific explanations. So, Descartes is not talking about the absence or presence of the body as such, but only of the two different modes of relating to the world, one of which, namely "the body," traces out the causal connections between the appearances constrained in terms of the timeline. So, whether we can or cannot employ understanding without a body—my particular, empirical, psychological body—is not an issue—this is never a problem for Descartes.

Here is another instance of a misunderstanding. It is not entirely unfounded, and thus the most dangerous kind, since it is based on a close or thorough study of the work, and yet, it does not succeed in engaging with this work through the act of philosophizing.

> In general, the fact that the faculty of imagination, like sensation, involves bodily as well as mental operations led Descartes to regard it as in a certain sense a *contaminated* source of knowledge, particularly with respect to metaphysical inquiries. For the aim of metaphysics is to lead the mind away from the senses in order to allow the pure perceptions of the *intellect* to flourish; hence when planning the writing of the *Meditations*, Descartes wrote to Mersenne that

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[411] To More, February 5, 1649. CSMK, p. 361.

[412] Cottingham, John. *A Descartes Dictionary*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1993, p. 84.

although he had found imagination helpful in his mathematical work, he found it 'more of a hindrance than help in metaphysical speculation.'[413]

In a sense Cottingham is correct, for even from what I have discussed already we can see that the imagination is indeed inessential, and therefore obstructs an act of the understanding, an act of thinking being. Yet, for Descartes this does not entail the kind of purism that came under severe criticism in recent decades precisely because the separation between the intuition and the understanding needs to be maintained only at the very specific moment of thinking. So, to attribute to the understanding this negative feature is to misinterpret.

In other words, we need to be extremely careful in putting forth the criticisms of Descartes, since we are the heirs to the longstanding tradition of studying Descartes without making an effort to understand him or think along with him, i.e. being very well-informed mortals approaching a past thought. In contrast to such an approach Mamardashvili engages with Descartes in a philosophical manner, i.e. he is determined to think on his own. Such an engagement begins with a realization that it is philosophically uninteresting or inconsistent to think of the mind/body distinction as implying Descartes's negative attitude towards the body, or his forgetting of the body. So, it must mean something else.[414] Such an engagement ultimately consists in an effort to keep Descartes's thought in mind, or the effort of remembering up (ἀναμιμνήσκω). But, of course, this is an extremely difficult task, even for Descartes himself. But about this a bit later. For now let us remember Descartes's plea in the Preface to the *Principles*: "And I must also beg my readers never to attribute to me any opinion they do not find explicitly stated in my writings."[415] So, in a sense, it is true that the imagination contaminates the pure understanding, yet before we attribute to him purism or the forgetting of the body we need to get absolutely clear on what he means.[416]

In order to see that Descartes does not reduce the human being to the machine, but rather by using the scientific approach zooms in on the appearances, since they too must be learned, as Parmenides tells us,[417] let us consider the *Treatise on Man*. In it Descartes sets out to explore the human being, but only from one angle, i.e. from what he calls the body. He warns us at the very beginning that this is his project. He is taking on a purely scientific approach, insofar as science is defined as that which relies on causal explanations. "…I have supposed in it only organs and mechanisms of such a type that

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[413] *Ibid*., p. 85, emphasis added. Includes a quotation to Mersenne, 13 November 1639, CSMK, p. 141. Also see Rule XII and XIV of the *Regulae*, CSM I, p. 43 and ff.

[414] It is exactly such a creative approach to the philosophical texts that Deleuze is going to endorse in *What Is Phylosophy?*, as I have already asserted in the Introduction.

[415] Preface to the French Edition of the *Principles*. CSM I, p. 189.

[416] As we will see in the Conclusion, Deleuze in an effort to de-hierarchize thinking criticizes purity and prioritizes the mixture. However, only purity misunderstood by the mortal poses the problem which then requires thinkers like Deleuze to try and reverse the state of affairs.

[417] Parmenides, *Poem*, B8, 51-52.

you may well believe very similar ones to be present both in us and in many animals that lack reason as well."[418] Descartes is even more explicit in this quote:

> I should like you to consider, after this, all the functions I have ascribed to this machine—such as the digestion of food, the beating of the heart and arteries…the reception by the external sense organs of light, sounds, smells, tastes, heat and other such qualities, the imprinting of the ideas of these qualities in the organ of the 'common' sense and the imagination…. I should like you to consider that these functions follow from the mere arrangement of the machine's organs every bit as naturally as the movement of a clock or other automaton follow from the arrangements of its counter-weights and wheels.[419]

Unfortunately, science after Descartes took on one of these approaches, namely "the body," while disregarding the other without realizing that the mind is also indispensable for thinking the world. For ultimately our task is to keep in mind the oneness of the two—the oneness that can be articulated only with utmost difficulty.

What is this oneness? As we remember from Descartes's letter to Elizabeth from 28th of June, 1643 quoted at length above, the notion "union of the soul and the body" is known clearly by the senses, and only obscurely by either understanding alone or understanding and imagination together. It is in this letter that Descartes also asserts that the union is not a given, and we, the human beings, still have to learn to conceive it. As I will discuss in the second part of this chapter, learning to conceive this union will require a special effort on the philosopher's part. The oneness of the two is intuited and articulated, but only with marginal success. In addition, Descartes claims that we *know* the union by the senses and this is perhaps a rather unusual claim, yet it ultimately supports Descartes's assertion in the *Meditations* that thinking also includes sensations. Note too that conversation and living are here prioritized by Descartes, which clearly goes against the typical accusations of Descartes-the-rationalist.

To summarize, the mind is the way of conceiving the world from the side of being and requires the engagement of the understanding alone. Whereas the body is the way of approaching the appearances and requires both the imagination and the understanding. The scientific framework prioritizes the imagination. Descartes, while seeing the value of such purely mechanistic approach, is fully aware that it is necessary to hold in mind and try to articulate the oneness of the mind and the body. [420]

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[418] *Treatise on Man*, CSM I, p. 107.

[419] *Ibid*., p. 108.

[420] In relation to this distinction the following quotations discussing the animals might be of interest: "As for dogs and apes, even were I to concede that they have thought, it would not in any way follow from this that the human mind is not distinct from the body; the conclusion would rather be that in other animals, too, the mind is distinct from the body" (CSM II, p. 287). In some cases Descartes is very clear that "the brutes possess no thought whatsoever." (CSM II, p. 287.) However, in others he only asserts that the animals "lack reason, and *perhaps* even thought…" (*Passions*, CSM I, p. 348, emphasis added).

Method

But let's return to the "uncommon" pure understanding, or understanding by itself—what I have been calling in the previous chapters thinking-being, or the philosophical thinking proper. Descartes realizes very well that it is distinct from the quantifiable capacities of the human mind:

> For my part, I have never presumed my mind [*esprit*] to be in any way more perfect than that of the ordinary man; indeed I have often wished to have as quick a wit [*la pensée*], or as sharp and distinct an imagination, or as ample or prompt a *memory* [*la mémoire aussi ample, ou aussi présente*] as some others…. But I say without hesitation that I have the great fortune to have happened upon certain paths in my youth which led me to considerations and maxims from which I formed a method whereby, it seems to me, I can increase my knowledge [*ma connaissance*] gradually [*par degrés*] and raise it little by little to the highest point allowed by the mediocrity of my mind [*mon esprit*] and the short duration of my life.[421]

In other words, philosophical thought does not depend on the sharpness of imagination, or ample memory, even though this is not to say that these qualities of the mind are entirely irrelevant.

I will discuss to what extent this passage is Descartes's mask in the last section of this chapter. For now let's assume that Descartes is not dissimulating when he claims that he thinks of his mind or *esprit* as ordinary. Yet, what offsets this is the fact that he formed or formulated a method. In other words, the importance of all of the scientifically measurable capacities of the human mind, including good memory and sharp imagination fades in the presence of the method.

Now, the interesting question is What is this method? It might seem that the answer is too obvious—after all the passage is taken from the book entitled *The Discourse on Method* where Descartes explicitly states the four precepts or rules of his method: 1) the criterion of truth is clarity and distinctness which precludes the possibility of doubt,[422] 2) the difficulties are to be divided into simples or parts, 3) thinking is to move from the simplest to the most complex objects, i.e. in an orderly manner, and 4) care is to be taken to leave nothing out. Indeed, this is Descartes's method.

However, looking at Descartes's thought as a whole, it is possible to discern another method—the method that is closely connected with what I have been calling the philosophical persona of Descartes. The principle behind this method begins coming to

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[421] *Discourse on Method*, CSM I, p. 111-112, translation adjusted upon the recommendation of David Allison, emphasis mine.

[422] Descartes defines clear as "present and accessible to the attentive mind" and distinct "as well as being clear, it is so sharply separated from all other perceptions that it contains within itself only what is clear" (*Principles*, CSM I, p. 208).

the surface when we consider the first rule mentioned above, i.e. the famous criterion of clarity and distinctness and the fact that it emerges as such only in the face of extreme doubt, or the sophist. For it is indeed the sophist who makes the human being doubt his or her memory by pointing out its shortcomings and thus prompts this human being to think other than in the mortal way, i.e. without the recourse to his or her good or bad memory, or the sharpness of imagination, or the quickness of thought.

So, on another level Descartes's method is the way of provoking or evoking thought, which eventually requires an engagement of a non-bodily kind of memory. Descartes applies this method every time he sets out to think, that is, in virtually every one of his writings—the *Discourse*, the *Meditations*, the *Search for Truth*, the *Principles of Philosophy*—the first move is the one in which Descartes-the-sophist destroys Descartes-the-mortal. In other words, this move is the one that frees us from our mortal tendency towards excessive contextualization, or picture-thinking or propensity towards reducing our thought to the appearances.[423] In other words, to conceiving the world only in terms of the body.[424]

Descartes's other method thus, is first of all designed to disengage our imagination. That is, the first is a purely negative move. However, such disengagement allows us to fully actualize the understanding alone. In other words, it is followed by the philosophical act or event. In Descartes's case this act is called the *cogito*.

The *cogito* is a singular or particular act of understanding on which Descartes's philosophical project is built. But it is not just any act, since the *cogito* is the act of thinking the oneness of thinking and being. Philosophy does not have to begin with this particular act, but both Parmenides and Descartes begin this way, for both of them begin from the beginning.

So, for Descartes too the *cogito* is the properly first—although not pedagogically or hierarchically, but ontologically—act of understanding.

On the most basic level the *cogito* is the both famous and infamous slogan, perhaps the most well-known of all the philosophical slogans. We first encounter it in Part IV of the *Discourse*—the French "*je pense, donc je suis*," and seven years later in the *Principles of Philosophy*—the Latin "*cogito ergo sum*." I think therefore I am.

In both French and Latin we encounter a "therefore." Yet, the *cogito* is not an argument.

In the Second Replies Descartes writes: "When we become aware that we are thinking beings, this is a primary notion, which is not derived by means of any syllogism."[425] In the *Conversation with Burman* Descartes explains that, of course, the major premise which logically comes first is "whatever thinks exists," however, since "I am attending only to what I *experience* within myself… I do not pay attention to the

[423] Cf. the third section of Chapter 2.

[424] This is not to say, of course, that the method destroys the mortal in us. We also need to be careful not to reduce Descartes's thought to a standard criticism of forgetting the body, since, again, it is not a physical, psychological or individual body or bodies that he is talking about.

[425] CSM II, p. 100.

general notion."[426] In other words, the laws of logic come later, after the philosophical act or with the second step, as Mamardashvili often puts it in his *Cartesian Reflections*.[427]

Descartes continues in his reply to the second set of objections:

> *Thirdly* when I said that we can know nothing for certain until we are aware that God exists, I expressly declared that I was speaking only of knowledge of those conclusions which can be *recalled* when we are no longer attending to the arguments by means of which we deduced them…. And when we become aware that we are thinking things, this is a primary notion which is not derived by means of any syllogism. When somebody says 'I am thinking, therefore I am, or I exist', he does not deduce existence from thought by means of a syllogism, but recognizes it as something self-evident by a simple *intuition of the mind*. This is clear from the fact that if he were deducing it by means of a syllogism, he would have to have had previous knowledge of the major premise 'Everything which thinks is, or exists'; yet in fact he learns it from experiencing in his own case that it is impossible that he should think without existing.[428]

Notice, that we do not have to use our bodily or factual memory—the kind of memory that is usually necessary for deductive reasoning—to perform this act. Thus, the act of the *cogito* is a singular act that needs to be performed every time anew. This perfectly illustrates the point that I will develop towards the end of this chapter, namely that philosophy both has a history and doesn't have it in the sense of always needing to begin anew.

Descartes's claim "I think, therefore I am" is thus neither a syllogism nor a statement of identity, but rather an assertion of the oneness of thinking and being. In fact, Descartes is convinced that we are always thinking: "But the mind cannot ever be without thought; it can of course be without this or that thought, but it cannot be without *some* thought."[429] In other words, the act of the *cogito* makes explicit the fact that "the same is to think as well as to be" or that "not without being, in which it is what has been uttered, will you find thinking."[430] It is quite evident from the above that by "the mind" we do not mean this or that particular mind, but rather an approach or a state which the human being can take on. It is indeed true that in respect to that state it makes no sense to assert that there can be no thought.

Descartes's statement above is an attempt to explain to Burman his response to the fourth set of objections—those advanced by Arnauld. At the very end of the

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[426] CSMK, p. 333, emphasis added.

[427] Cottingham too recognizes the fact that the *cogito* is not an argument: "It should be stressed, however, that what is crucial for Descartes in uncovering the certainty of his existence is not the formal validity of an abstract piece of reasoning, but rather an individual *act* of thinking: it is in the performance of this act by each individual meditator that the certainty of his existence becomes manifest, and indubitable" (*A Descartes Dictionary*, p. 35).

[428] CSM II, p. 100, emphasis added, except for the first word.

[429] *Conversation with Burman*, CSMK, p. 336.

[430] Parmenides, *Poem*, B3 and B8, 35-36.

objections Arnauld raises the following issue: Descartes "lays it down as certain that there can be nothing in him, in so far as he is a thinking thing, of which he is not aware, but it seems to me that this is false. For by 'himself, in so far as he is a thinking thing', he means simply his mind, in so far as it is distinct from the body. But all of us can surely see that there may be many things in our mind of which the mind is not aware."[431] Notice right away that Arnauld commits a mistake of imagining the mind, in other words he thinks of it as of some receptacle for thoughts, from which thoughts are occasionally picked out. Quite contrary to this, as I have been arguing, the mind is a specific act of approaching being, the act of thinking-being. Thus, in his response Descartes makes the following, at the first glance rather shocking, assertion:

> As to the fact that there can be nothing in the mind, in so far as it is a thinking thing, of which it is not aware, this seems to me to be self-evident. For there is nothing that we can understand to be in the mind, regarded in this way, that is not a thought or dependent on a thought. If it were not a thought or dependent on a thought it would not belong to mind *qua* thinking thing; and we cannot have any thought of which we are not aware *at the very moment when it is in us*.[432]

Surely, Arnauld's claim makes much more sense: aren't there indeed many things or thoughts in our mind of which we are not aware? Yet, Descartes is correct, and the key to understanding his claim is the phrase "at the very moment when it is in us." In other words, Descartes and Arnauld are talking about two quite different things: Arnauld is trying to imagine a mind, i.e. he thinks about it from the perspective of the body, and thus, cannot but be puzzled by Descartes's insistence that there is nothing of which this mind is not aware. Yet, Descartes most certainly admits that from our ordinary, mortal perspective there is content of our mind of which we are not aware. Simply consider the following example from the *Passions*—an example worthy of Freud:

> the smell of the roses must have caused severe headache in a child when he was still in the cradle, or a cat may have terrified him without anyone noticing and without any memory of it remaining afterwards; and yet the idea of the aversion he then felt for the roses or for the cat will remain imprinted on his brain till the end of his life.[433]

In other words, of course there are thoughts *in* us, insofar as we are mortal, of which we are not aware. Yet, this is not what Descartes means when he is considering the human being as the being that thinks, or from the angle of the mind. For at that very moment or in that respect it is indeed impossible for us not to be aware of my thoughts.

The above claim is closely tied to Descartes's idea that since the philosopher is the one who understands, then the philosopher *simpliciter* cannot err: "everything that I

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[431] CSM II, p. 150.

[432] *Ibid*., p. 171.

[433] *The Passions*, section 136. CSM I, p. 376.

understand I undoubtedly understand correctly, and any error here is impossible."[434] When Descartes asks what is the source of his errors he answers that it is extending the will to the matters that one does not understand. In other words, only the mortal errs, whereas the sophist is the one who points out the errors.

Returning to the passage from the second set of objections quoted above, and in particular to the assertion that "When somebody says 'I am thinking, therefore I am, or I exist', it is important to note that Descartes does not deduce existence from thinking by means of a syllogism, but recognizes it as something self-evident by a "simple *intuition of the mind*."[435] We find a similar statement in the *Discourse*: "I observed that there is nothing at all in the proposition "I am thinking, therefore I exist' to assure me that I am speaking the truth, except that I see *very clearly* that in order to think it is necessary to exist"[436] we yet once again in our analysis encounter the notion of intuition. As you recall, intuition played a major role in Parmenides' *Poem*, and as we will witness in a moment it is also central to Deleuze's understanding of philosophy. Let us trace out then, Descartes's thoughts on intuition.

In the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* he writes:

> …let us now review all the actions of the intellect by means of which we are able to arrive at a knowledge of things with no fear of being mistaken. We recognize only two: intuition and deduction.
> By intuition… [I mean] the conception of a clear and attentive mind, which is so easy and distinct that there can be no room for doubt about what we are understanding…. Because it is simpler, it is more certain than deduction…. Thus everyone can mentally intuit that he exists, that he is thinking, that a triangle is bound by just three lines, and the sphere by a single surface, and the like.[437]

The fact that there is no room for doubt means that the sophist is powerless at the point of intuition. Thus, intuition gives us the first principles of philosophy, i.e. the new/old philosophy: "And observing that this truth '*I am thinking, therefore I exist*' was so firm and sure that all the most extravagant suppositions of the skeptics were incapable of shaking it, I decided that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking."[438] I called it the new/old since, as I will discuss in the last section, Descartes knows that anybody who thinks can "stumble upon" these principles. In fact, as Descartes's correspondents point out, Augustine has a strikingly similar formulation, just as Parmenides does, although he phrases it a bit differently.

That is, Descartes's notion of intuition is extremely close to the one discussed by me in Chapter 1. The only difference might seem to consist in the intuition's close

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[434] CSM II, p. 40.

[435] *Ibid*., p. 100, emphasis added.

[436] *Discourse on Method*. CSM I, p. 127, emphasis added.

[437] CSM I, p. 14.

[438] CSM I, p. 127.

connection with the intellect in Descartes's theory, whereas I insist on the idea that the moment of intuition in no way prioritizes the intellect, or the rational. However, the issue is easily resolvable if we consider that at the points when the intuition is discussed by him Descartes focuses exclusively on the philosopher. Thus, he uses the notion of intuition in a more precise or limited way—he approaches the notion of intuition having already made the distinction between the understanding and the imagination, and considers the intuition as that which only involves the understanding. In addition, the *cogito* as a philosophical act can be performed only by the philosopher, although anybody (any being) can have an intuition, since the philosopher is the only one who approaches an intuition through the understanding.

So, we see that the *cogito*—apart from being the first principle upon which Descartes builds his position—is also a more general name for the philosopher's intuition, i.e. for the act of the understanding that happens once the sophist destroys the imagination, or dispenses with its weight.[439] So, in this sense Descartes's act of the *cogito* becomes a symbol of the philosophical act.

Thus, Descartes's method is what enables us to think philosophically. If we look at the *Principles of Philosophy* for one obvious example (although the exact same strategical move reappears again and again in the *Meditations* and the *Discourse* and unfinished *The Search for Truth)* Descartes begins with doubt (principles 1-6), i.e. with a sophistical trick that disorients the mortal and is ultimately necessary for the being of philosopher. However, with the seventh principle the *cogito* appears as "the first thing we come to know when we philosophize."[440] That is, nothing other than doubting brought us to the point from which we are able to think.

Moreover, we learn that the distinction between the soul and the body can only be thought because we performed the act of the *cogito*.

> For if we, who are supposing that everything which is distinct from us is false, examine what we are, we see very clearly that neither extension nor shape nor local motion, nor anything of this kind which is attributable to a body, belongs to our nature, but that thought alone belongs to it. So our knowledge of our thought is prior to, and more certain than, our knowledge of any corporeal thing…[441]

Here we are clearly considering the world from the perspective of the philosopher, i.e. the one performing the act of the *cogito*, and thus are able to look only at it insofar as it *is*.

That is, as the philosopher I have to admit the priority of thought, in other words, if I look at the world only insofar as I am a philosopher I will not see any appearances—what Descartes calls "the body." So, philosophizing "in an orderly way" we cannot but distinguish between the mind and the body. The theoretical conundrums come only at

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[439] Cf. Edward Casey's treatment of memory, especially his comment on Kundera's lightness of being in *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987, pp. 3-4.

[440] CSM I, p. 194.

[441] *Principles*. CSM I, p. 195.

the point when we do not take "sufficient care to distinguish the mind from the body."[442] Indeed, we need this distinction, as we will see in a moment, in order to have science, to be able to redirect our passions, i.e. to be able to articulate and recreate or transform the world. But the transformation itself is only possible if an additional step is made.

Quite a few of Descartes contemporaries are troubled or puzzled by this two sided way of looking at the world. Among them is Princess Elizabeth who questions Descartes about the separation. What about the oneness? In fact, the world is oneness of the appearances and being, so that when we look at it from the side of thinking we see being, and from the side of the body we see the appearances. Finally, if we keep in mind the two we will be able to rearrange the appearances according to being.

So, to reach the properly philosophical moment we need to separate, but only in order to reconnect in a more profound way: "I must admit, however, that the fact that the mind is closely conjoined with the body, which we experience constantly through our senses, does result in our not being aware of the real distinction between mind and body unless we attentively meditate on the subject."[443] This idea will become especially prominent in the Conclusion with respect to Deleuze's discussion of the method of intuition.

In the third moment the philosopher makes a special effort to think the oneness of the appearances and being. The philosopher intuits the one, and understands it insofar as she says "only the *is* is."[444] However, the next moment of the method is the acknowledgment that "its name shall be everything." [445] The philosopher makes an effort of keeping in mind the intuition, and thus engaging the mortal who by him or herself is not able to hold an intuition, since he or she forgets.

It is in this moment that the philosopher is able to transform the world. And what initially drew my attention to Descartes are precisely these moments of transformation that are discernible in his writings. These moments form condensation points of what I have been calling the philosophical persona of Descartes. The passage from the letter to Princess Elizabeth with which I begin this chapter is one such instance, the passages from the *Passions* that I will shortly quote are other. If we read Descartes carefully we are bound to notice that his writings as a whole are structured in such a way as to lead up to these moments in the text where Descartes the philosopher and Descartes the mortal are harmoniously unified.

The oneness of the two different approaches to the world—one, which we call "the mind," another, which we call "the body"—is not so easily articulated, although that in no way effects the ease with which we live in the world. To repeat: "…what belongs to the union of the soul and the body can be known only obscurely by pure understanding or by understanding aided by imagination, but it can be known very clearly by the

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[442] *Principles*. CSM I, p. 196.

[443] CSM II, p. 160.

[444] Cf. Parmenides, *Poem*, B2.

[445] *Ibid*., B8, 38.

senses."[446] And several sentences later: "But it is the ordinary course of life and conversation, and abstention from meditation and from the study of the things which exercise the imagination, that teaches us how to conceive the union of the soul and the body."[447] What is important here is that the mortal does not automatically know the union, but rather, "the ordinary course of life" teaches him or her. In other words, the mortal also has to learn this, but he or she learns it through intuition that is never articulated, thus is never philosophical intuition proper. What distinguishes the philosopher who has an intuition from the mortal who also has it, is that the philosopher has a desire—one of the six primitive passions, as Descartes points out at the beginning of Part II of his *Passions*[448]—to hold or to keep in mind this experience and to think it out. In other words, the philosopher is passionate about thinking out an intuition, whereas the mortal forgets it, or, better yet, lets it slip away. Here, once again we are reminded of a Heraclitus' saying: the mortals let slip away or λανθάνει the λόγος.[449]

So, the philosopher is the one who has the intuition or the one who performs the act of the *cogito*. But this intuition needs to be remembered in order to have actual effects on the appearances, or on the body:

> I am unable to keep my attention fixed on one and the same item of knowledge at all times; but by *attentive* and repeated meditation I am nevertheless able to make myself remember it as often as the need arises, and thus get into the habit of avoiding error.[450]

That is, I, the philosopher, have to remember in order to recreate the world. However, this kind of memory is not equivalent to pure memorization of information—this kind of memory is not a purely physical process. Rather, by such memory we mean the process of keeping in mind or being attentive to an intuition, thus making it an inseparable part of who we are. This ultimately means changing our being and consequently the world. To differentiate the memory that is necessary at this stage from the bodily memory I will call it, following Plato, remembering up or keeping in mind—ἀνάμνησις.[451] This other kind of memory or keeping in mind is the effort of the philosopher qua philosopher, but necessarily engages the mortal aspect. Thus, only unified with the mortal the philosopher is the one who remembers. Such remembering involves articulations of the world, thus necessarily the engagement with the "body" or the appearances, and thus, the use of the imagination. Only because of such engagement, the possibility of enacting actual change

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[446] To Elizabeth, June 28, 1643. Kenny, *Philosophical Letters*, p. 141, translation adjusted by me.

[447] To Elizabeth, June 28, 1643. *Ibid*., p. 141; CSMK, p. 227.

[448] CSM I, p. 353.

[449] Cf. Heraclitus, Fragment 1.

[450] CSM II, p. 43, emphasis added.

[451] Usually this term has been translated into English as "recollection." At present, I would like to distance myself from certain common misconceptions of the notion of recollection, thus, I am choosing to translate it more literally. The most extensive treatment of ἀνάμνησις can be found in Plato's *Meno*.

in the causal configurations of the appearances arises.[452] This kind of memory is what in the first chapter I called thinking through an intuition. In Descartes's writings this moment is represented by the attempt to move from the certainty of the *cogito* to the certainty of everything else, i.e. the body via the certainty of God's existence.

Thus, to sum up, at a deeper level the method consists of three moments: the first is the sophistical moment of doubt, the second one is the purely philosophical moment of intuition (it has so much certainty that there is no room for the sophist, neither is there room for error, and thus the mortal), finally, the intuition remembered up or kept in mind (paradoxically "up" entails the movement towards "contamination" by the imagination) is the moment of the philosopher-mortal.

Having discussed the method of the *cogito*, let us return to the distinction between the understanding and the imagination. In Meditation Two Descartes asserts that imagination cannot be used to understand the "I" of the *cogito*, i.e. of the act "I think, I am" because "…'I' cannot be pictured in the imagination."[453] So, in order to understand the philosopher or the mind, I cannot rely on the imagination, or picture-thinking. I can use only the understanding to conceive what thinking is. Yet, insofar as I am a philosopher working with my mortal, I am also somebody who imagines. In other words, if we look at the human being only by way of being we see thought. To this is also related Descartes's claim mentioned earlier that we always think, we only need to remember that Descartes's notion of thinking includes willing, sensing, imagining as well as using reason.

"I am, then, in the strict sense only a thing that thinks"[454] Here, as Descartes claims in his reply to Gassendi, "only" refers to the phrase "in the strict sense."[455] That is, only in the strict sense, i.e. only with respect to being or the *is* I, the human being, am that which thinks. Only in the philosophical act such as the act of the *cogito* I am the thing that thinks. When I try to use my imagination in order to conceive thinking, I fail, since the sophist through radical doubt destroys the kind of thinking called "the body," and the imagination deals with the extended things: "for imagining is simply contemplating the shape or image of a corporeal thing."[456]

Now we are in the position to understand much better the following assertion from the *Meditations*:

> I thus realize that none of the things that the imagination enables me to grasp is at all relevant to this knowledge of myself which I possess, and that the mind must

[452] This idea will be further developed in the Conclusion.

[453] CSM II, p. 20.

[454] *Ibid*., p. 18.

[455] *Ibid*., p. 276.

[456] *Ibid*., p. 19.

> therefore be most carefully diverted from such things if it is to perceive its own nature as distinctly as possible.[457]

We can now see what Descartes is not expressing his contempt for or indifference to an individual or physical/psychological body, but rather is speaking about a philosophical act. Moreover, if it is objected that this kind of thinking about the human being or, more generally, the world is incomplete, we are able to remember or keep in mind that approaching the human being from the side of the appearances, i.e. in a scientific way, is also incomplete. Perhaps for us it is more visible in the case of Descartes, since the way in which he often describes bodies seems outdated and even ridiculous to a 21st century reader. However, we often forget or let slip away the fact that we allow today's science to do virtually the same. In fact, the Western world zoomed in on what is merely one side of Descartes's approach and disregarded the necessity of holding on to the other: science became, for the most part, a one-dimensional endeavor. The sign of this is its separation from philosophy, or from the ability to look at the world from the side of being, and see the world as thinking: imagining, feeling, willing, refusing.[458]

So, the distinction between the mind and the body is just that—the two ways of looking at what is: either we only see the appearances or we only see being. These ways are not incompatible, but a special effort needs to be exerted in order to think the one of the two. The act of the *cogito* is the act of thinking being or approaching being only through the understanding. This particular philosophical act is the act of intuiting that thinking and being are one. The next moment of the method consists in the philosopher's effort to keep the one of the world in mind, or remember this oneness. In other words, the philosopher is trying to conceive how being and the appearances, or the mind and the body constitute one.

So, now we are in a better position to understand Descartes when he claims that "common" notions "are not equally perceived by everyone," but not because "one man's faculty of knowledge extends more widely than another's."[459] Rather, what is crucial here is the method, for it allows us to get to the point where we can think clearly, by distinguishing between the mind and the body, and then unifying the two. This is especially visible in the method itself as the movement from the sophist through the philosopher to the mortal. However, as Descartes notes himself, this is not the only way to think. That is, the configuration of the three moments is specific to Descartes's context, but the fact that all three are to be involved is a necessary feature of thinking. This particular order is the most productive for him, but others might find more helpful routes. So, his method is an example of the relationship between philosophy and its history in the sense that it is true once and for all, yet, at the same time, it does not have to be followed exactly, i.e. other formulations or configurations are possible. Descartes's philosophy doesn't close the doors by doing something once and for all, although in a

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[457] *Ibid*., p. 19.

[458] Undoubtedly, there have been some notable exceptions to this. To mention merely one instance of the refusal to understand science without the philosophical moment we can consider the work of Gaston Bachelard.

[459] CSM I, p. 280.

sense it does do something once and for all, insofar as every philosophical act has the form of the *cogito*, but this is also the sense in which Parmenides' goddess does something once and for all, yet it has to be repeated every time we philosophize. In fact, Descartes himself has to enact the *cogito* every time he philosophizes, as I pointed out above. Here another connection with Parmenides becomes noticeable: only the way of the *is* is and it constitutes one with the route of the appearances. Yet, the third route keeps turning back on itself, or constantly changes its shape, and so, its oneness with the first one will appear to be different each time. So, looking forward to the Conclusion we can say that Deleuze's criticism of Cartesian assumptions—what Deleuze calls the Image of thought—is yet another variation of the oneness of these routes. That is, Deleuze simply creates another configuration of the philosopher, the sophist, and the mortal.

Memory

> …reading in ourselves, and only in ourselves, we again recreate ideas, we 'remember'. Only those ideas are true, according to Descartes, that are recreated or born once again. In this sense doubt is creation anew, there is no truth without it…. Mamardashvili. *Cartesian Reflections*

So, the distinction between the mind and the body emerges in the course of the method or as a result of following the method, since only thanks to its moment we are able to separate the understanding from the imagination. Now the question is How does this help us understand philosophy's relationship to its own past? We began seeing with the *cogito* how it is the first philosophical act but also only a symbol of such an act in the sense that the act does not have to contain the same intuition. For both Parmenides and Descartes the intuition happens to be the same: both of them think the oneness of thinking and being. Yet, at the same time the manner in which they get to this intuition is quite different: Descartes engages the sophist, whereas Parmenides undergoes a mystical experience.

The same is the case with Descartes's "other" method: it places the three aspects of the human being in a specific configuration—the sophist comes first, then the philosopher and only then the philosopher-mortal. But, of course, the configuration can be quite different. In other words, the way in which the third route converges with the first one is particular to Descartes, but the fact that the two converge is not dependent on any context.

The same holds for the way in which such convergence is established. For the fact that there are these routes is an ahistorical claim, and its particularity comes with the

elaboration of their oneness. In Descartes's case such elaboration is tied to his conception of God.[460]

In this section I will make even more explicit the interplay between the context and a-contextuality of philosophy. Mirroring the three moments of the method, I will explore philosophy's relationship to its own history. I will show in what sense the context makes a difference for philosophy, thus considering the moment of the philosopher-mortal. I will also elucidate the sense in which philosophy doesn't have a history, or is context-independent, contemplating the philosopher qua philosopher. Finally, I will show that the historiographic understanding of philosophy incites both revolutions and the mask, thus focusing on the philosopher's sophistical moment.

The distinction between the factual or bodily memory, and the kind of memory that involves keeping in mind the philosophical intuition, will help me to set up my argument.

The bodily memory is treated quite frequently throughout Descartes's corpus.[461] Consider, for instance, the Fourth Meditation:

> The phantasy [corporeal imagination or corporeal expression of imagination] is a genuine part of the body, and is large enough to allow different parts of it to take on many different figures and, generally, to retain them for some time; in which case it is to be identified with what we call 'memory'.[462]

As we see in the above quotation, memory is explicitly connected with the imagination and thus with the body.

In the *Treatise on Man*, where Descartes is quite explicit that he is approaching the human being only as the body, or only through the explanatory paradigm that relies on causal explanations, he sets out to explore "how the traces are imprinted on the internal part of the brain which is the seat of the *memory*."[463] Here is a brief summary of his account.

Spirits leaving the pineal gland and moving to the internal part of the brain enlarge the gaps between the fibers of the brain

> according to the various ways in which the spirits are moving and the different openings of the tubes into which they pass. Thus they also trace figures in these gaps, which correspond to those of objects. At first they do it less easily…, but

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[460] The certainty of the body or, in my rendition, the ability to conceive the unity of the mind and the body, is guaranteed, claims Descartes, by "God." So, "God" is the link between the certainty of the *cogito* and the certainty of the appearances. Now the question is whether Descartes himself manages to hold this unity in mind. Perhaps, but this would require another study. All I want to do at the present moment is to point out that this is the manner in which he accomplishes this move towards the mortal.

[461] Of course, such memory can be explored further, distinguishing among its different aspects, but this is not my primary concern here. Instead I want to clearly delineate the memory that is a kind of keeping in mind from the factual memory.

[462] CSM II, p. 41-42.

[463] CSM I, p. 106.

> gradually they do it better and better…. That is why these figures are no longer so easily erased, and why they are preserved in such a way that the ideas which were previously in the gland can be formed again long afterwards without requiring the presence of the objects to which they correspond. And this is what memory consists in.[464]

Here we have a purely mechanistic account of memory. It is inaccurate according to the scientific standards of our own time, nevertheless it is a scientific account, i.e. an account in relation to extension only. The human body—and thus, memory as one of its parts—is considered only from the angle of the body. As a result we get the human being as the machine: spirits passing through the gaps, or, as we are more inclined saying today, neurons firing. That's all, nothing more.[465]

In the passage with which I opened this section, as well as in the *Discourse*, memory is described as "preserving" the ideas received in the "common sense."[466] It is identified as that which helps me to imagine the sensory experiences that I had on earlier occasions. So, the bodily memory enables me to "retain for some time," and also allows me to imagine something that I perceived in the past. Quite clearly then, this kind of memory is connected to the timeline-like understanding of time.

In other words, what Descartes does is use a very specific explanatory method: he looks at the human being from the mechanistic/bodily side. Such a stance is a properly scientific one and should not to be confused with the mortal, although this explanation is the most comprehensible one to the mortal, since he or she has a tendency to think in causal terms.

This is the memory that can err: "we think we perceived in the past"[467] even though we did not (whereas, if you recall, the philosopher does not, cannot make mistakes). So, from the perspective of the body memory can be either good or bad.[468]

However, there is another kind of memory in Descartes—the one that is not accountable in terms of the body.

If we look at the *Passions* we notice that Descartes has not one but rather two different definitions of the passions. Such double identification both reflects and clarifies his ideas about the distinction between the mind and the body.

In section 27 Descartes provides us with the "official" definition. The passions are thoughts, he claims, and more specifically "those perceptions, sensations or emotions of the soul which we refer particularly to it, and which are caused, maintained and

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[464] *Ibid*., p. 107.

[465] What is often called the "intellectual" memory (CSMK, p. 336-7, *Conversation with Burman*) also falls into the category of the bodily memory. Descartes's example of remembering the word "King" is still a mechanistic occurrence, and that is why he is unwilling to disconnect it from the body.

[466] CSM II, p. 41-42, CSM I, p. 138.

[467] CSM I, p. 207.

[468] *Ibid*., p. 25.

strengthened by some movement of the spirits."[469] He is quite clear that by the "movement of the spirits" he means nothing other than the body. [470]

Even though this definition is singled out by him as the main one, in order to do justice to his thought we need to take a closer look at the text as a whole. Once we do so we notice another definition of the passions in section 160. There Descartes claims that a passion is a *movement* that serves to strengthen a thought.[471] In other words, the emphasis is suddenly shifted from the thought to the movement, i.e. from the mind to the body.

In presenting us with these two distinct formulations of the passions Descartes is by no means being inconsistent. To the contrary, since he claims that the way of looking at the human being and the world in general as passionate makes visible the one of the mind and the body, then the ability to see this human being or the world as both thinking and extended is enhanced when we consider the passions.

As I have been arguing, in trying to understand the world as being we approach it philosophically, whereas in trying to manipulate the appearances we are doing science. These two approaches coexist side by side without being fully translatable into each other. In other words, if we are exploring the world in a purely scientific way—from the perspective of "the body"—the explanations based on the paradigm called "the mind" (according to which, for instance, only thought is absolutely certain) will be virtually incomprehensible.

What Descartes suggests is that being passionate is being able to see the approaches as distinct and yet also be able to unify them in the most coherent manner. That is, in our everyday experiences the passions are the most vivid instances of the oneness of the world—and here I am, perhaps, going a bit further than Descartes in claiming that it is not only our own oneness, but also that of any being. So, when we try to *conceive* or think through such instances it is easier to refrain from a one-sided approach, yet we cannot but help prioritizing either the "mind" or the "body."

I have been suggesting that the distinction between the mind and the body is a result of the philosophical desire to reconfigure the world through thinking. In section 211 of the *Passions* we find an especially vivid confirmation of this—there Descartes claims that in order to avoid the misuse of the passions we have to "separate within ourselves the movements of the blood and spirits from the thoughts to which they are joined."[472]

But what is the misuse of the passions? Let's first consider their usefulness: "The function of all the passions consists solely in this, that they dispose our soul to want the things which nature deems useful for us, and to persist in this volition…."[473] A little later in his treatise Descartes is even more explicit:

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[469] CSM I, p. 338-339.

[470] "For what I am calling 'spirits' here are merely bodies…" (*ibid*., p. 331).

[471] *Ibid*., p. 386.

[472] *Ibid*., p. 403.

[473] *Ibid*., p. 349.

> The utility of all the passions consists simply in the fact that they strengthen and prolong thoughts in the soul which it is good for the soul to preserve and which otherwise might easily be erased from it. Likewise the harm they may cause consists entirely in their strengthening and preserving these thoughts beyond what is required, or in their strengthening and preserving others on which it is not good to dwell.[474]

In other words, the passions allow us to keep a thought in mind or they allow this thought to move with time or in a body. Consequently, thanks to the passions the philosopher can transform the world. [475]

Let's look at one of the passions:

> Of wonder, in particular, we may say that it is useful in that it makes us learn and retain in our memory things of which we were previously ignorant…. But when something previously unknown to us comes before our understanding or our senses for the first time, this does not make us retain it in our memory unless our idea of it is strengthened in our brain by some passion, or perhaps also by an application of our understanding as fixed by our will in a special state of attention and reflection.[476]

That is, the intuition, i.e. something truly new, can be retained only because of the fact that we feel passionate about it or exert a special effort of attention.

So, the passions are most necessary for philosophy, and "the mistake we ordinarily make in this regard is never that we desire too much; it is rather that we desire too little." The problem for the philosopher arises only if she is dispassionate, since all the passions are "by nature good, and … we have nothing to avoid but their misuse or their excess."[477] For the mortal, however, the passions become problematic because he or she fails "to distinguish adequately the things which depend wholly on us from those which depend on us at all."[478] The remedy for this is Descartes's famous generosity[479]—

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[474] *Ibid*., p. 354.

[475] Such passionate approach presupposes movement, which is simply the engagement with the appearances. Notice that in contrast to this there is no movement of this sort in the *cogito*, and this is apparent even at the level of its articulation. As Dave Allison writes in his lecture on Discourse Four, "I apprehend as part of the content of my intuition, the very *fact* that I am intuition! Or, in other words: to be aware—to be aware of anything—entails already that *I am aware*! Thus, there is no movement to this argument, and consequently, no need of the 'therefore'" (p. 6).

[476] CSM I, p. 354-5.

[477] *Ibid*., p. 403.

[478] *Ibid*., p. 379.

[479] Cf. *ibid*., 384.

this "key to all other virtues."[480] Unfortunately, I have to leave out an account of generosity, even thought it is one of the clearest instances of Descartes's persona or of the philosopher's transformative intervention into the order of the appearances.

So, we have seen that the non-bodily memory entails a passionate approach to the world, i.e. is the effort necessary to keep an intuition in mind, and thus to reconfigure the appearances.

The Mask

> "…the past is thought's enemy." Mamardashvili. *Cartesian Reflections*
> "Under a mask—any mask, it does not matter which one, but there should be some mask—philosophical work is being done." Mamardashvili. *Cartesian Reflections*

Because philosophy is both context independent and does have to engage with the particular historical circumstances, Descartes's relationship with this discipline is an ambiguous one. By considering his persona we are able to discern this quite well. Now, exploring the particular historical situation of Descartes, I will bring to the surface the implications of the preceding section.

In his lectures Mamardashvili emphasizes the fact that Descartes's act of doubt leads to the realization that "the books are not born from books." Mamardashvili notes that this idea is made symbolically apparent in Descartes's biography—Descartes did not suffer from what Mamardashvili calls 'bookmania" or excessive reverence for books or scholarship: "of course, we are not talking about the hatred of books, but rather of the fact that *not* books give birth to books, that books are read only when there is something to remember and to learn from oneself."[481]

Descartes consistently rejects the authority of the tradition, and sees himself very much distinct from Scholasticism, but also from Plato, Aristotle, Augustine. This indicates that at the level of Descartes-the-philosopher the tradition is irrelevant and indeed all he needs is the great book of the world.

The need to dispense with the history in order to be able to create anew—this is what I called the necessary violence in Chapter 2—is quite often just what we witness in Descartes. In the preface to the *Principles of Philosophy* Descartes enumerates ways of reaching wisdom, and identifies himself with the fifth way, which "consists in the search for the first causes and the true principles which enable us to deduce the reasons for everything we are capable of knowing; and it is above all those who have labored to this

[480] *Ibid*., p. 388.

[481] Мамардашвили, *Картезианские размышления*, p. 190.

end who have been called philosophers. I am not sure, however, that there has been anyone up till now who has succeeded in this project."[482] Next Descartes proceeds to talk about Plato and Aristotle, saying that the only difference between the two is that Aristotle was "less candid." Moreover, the way in which he speaks about Plato and especially Aristotle is almost derogatory and clearly dismissive, i.e. quite unphilosophical. That is, Descartes becomes a sophist and critiques "traditional philosophy," be it Scholasticism or Ancient thought.[483] In other words, it is impossible to write on one's own the necessary violence, such as that of the Visitor. In the Conclusion we will see that Deleuze takes on exactly the same approach.

"Yet although all the truths which I include among my principles have been known for all time by everyone, there has, so far as I know, been no one up till now who has recognized them as the principle of philosophy, that is to say, as the principles which enable us to deduce the knowledge of all the other things to be found in the world."[484] The *cogito* is identified by Descartes as the first principle.

Yet, we know that he is nevertheless in constant communication with the tradition. His own distancing from the tradition does not prevent him from being a part Western thought.

Descartes's relationship with the Jesuits exhibits this ambiguity.

As it is very well known Descartes receives an excellent education at one of the best academic institutions of the time, the Jesuit college of La Flèche where he studies for eight or nine years and is one of the best students at the time. As we also know from his correspondence, Descartes does not altogether stop reading scholastic texts after the La Flèche period, although he is no longer directly a part of the academic scene. So, of course, we are not at all faced with a hatred of books, much less with ignorance of the philosophical tradition when we confront Descartes's decision to seek knowledge only in himself or in the "great book of the world." Instead we are dealing with an informed decision on Descartes's part to move away from slavish adherence to the authority of his scholarly predecessors, away from fetishizing books by way of merely writing books about books when he claims in the Discourse that he resolved "to seek no knowledge other than that which could be found in myself or else in the great book of the world."[485] Or when he asserts that

> after I had spent some years pursuing these studies in the book of the world and trying to gain some experience, I resolved one day to undertake studies within myself too and to use all the powers of my mind in choosing the paths I should follow. In this I have had much more success, I think, than I would have had if I had never left my country or my books.[486]

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[482] CSM I, p. 181.

[483] *Ibid.*, p. 185. See also Allison's second lecture on Descartes, p. 14-15.

[484] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

[485] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

[486] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

Moreover, at different points in his career and for different reasons Descartes actively engages with the Scholastic tradition. Just consider that he seeks to discuss his *Meditations* in the format of published objections and replies, or the fact that he approaches his former professors at La Flèche eliciting comments on his *Discourse*.

In addition, at a certain point in his career, after nearly twenty years of not engaging himself with the philosophy of the Schools, Descartes decides to reacquaint himself with the current scholastic debates. This occurs after he is severely criticized in absentia by Bourdin: "the cavils of Father Bourdin have resolved me to arm myself from now on, as much as I can, with the authority of others, since the truth is so little appreciated alone…. As a result, I feel like reading some of their philosophy—that which I have not done in twenty years—in order to see whether it now seems to me better than I once thought."[487]

Descartes also intended to write a textbook of his philosophy that would replace the texts of the Schools—*The Principles of Philosophy*. As a part of this project Descartes intends to comment on a standard text in Scholastic philosophy article by article: "in the same book, I will publish an ordinary philosophy texts…with my notes at the end of each question."[488] But quite soon Descartes gives up the idea: "…I have completely lost the intent to refute this philosophy [i.e. Scholasticism]; for I see that it is so absolutely and so clearly destroyed by means of the establishment of my philosophy alone, that no other refutation is needed."[489] Here we are reminded of Descartes's position on revolutionizing or changing the world as expressed in the *Discourse*—he decides once again not to rebuild the entire city. By looking at these historical circumstances of Descartes's life we witness the ambiguity of his relationship to these circumstances: he needs to disregard them in order to philosophize, yet he cannot disregard them completely, or he keeps a connection with the tradition.

Descartes himself recognizes this continuity. Jean Baptiste Morin sent Descartes a response after the publication of the *Discourse* in 1638:

> However, I do not know what to expect from you, for some have led me to believe that, if I used the terms of the schools, even a little, you would instantly judge me more worthy of disdain than of reply. But, reading your discourse, I do not judge you the enemy of the schools, as you are depicted… The schools seem only to have failed in that they were more occupied by speculation in the search for *terms* needed to treat things, than in the inquiry into the very truth of things by good experiments; thus they are poor in the latter and rich in the former. That is

[487] To Mersenne, September 30, 1640. CSMK, p. 154.

[488] CSMK, p. 157.

[489] Descartes, René. *Oevres de Descartes*. Vol. III. Ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1983, 470. Quoted in Roger Ariew's "Descartes and Scholasticism: The Intellectual Background to Descartes' Thought." *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*. Ed. John Cottingham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 76.

> why I am like you in this respect; I seek the truth of things only in nature and do not place my trust in the schools, which I use only for their terms.[490]

To this Descartes answers the following:

> As for the contempt which you were told I had for the Schools, this can only have been dreamt up by the people who do not know me or my habits or the way I view things. Of course in my essays I made hardly any use of terms which are familiar only to the learned; yet this is not to say that I disapprove of such terms, but merely that my aim was to make myself understood also by others.[491]

In other words, Descartes does not so much reject the traditional philosophical project as the mortal shape which it takes, or thought's reification.

But most importantly, because the third moment of Descartes's "other" method involves both the philosopher and the mortal, Descartes cannot claim complete independence from the tradition, nor can he disregard it entirely, even though in his purely philosophical moments he can indeed assert his complete freedom from it. So, Descartes distances himself from Scholasticism, although his communication with and belonging to the tradition is indisputable.

However, can such ambivalence on Descartes's part be a mask?

Indeed it can, but only on one level. And there are at least three interconnected levels of this mask: the level at which it is a work of the sophisticated mortal, the level at which it is the decision to adhere to a set of rules while realizing that they are merely the appearances, and finally the level at which the mask allows the philosopher to emerge.

Early in his philosophical career Descartes writes to Mersenne: "I desire to live in peace and to continue the life I have begun under the motto, *Bene vixit, bene qui latuit* [he lives well who hides himself well]."[492]

In addition, Descartes's earliest written work that survives until our days[493] opens with the following statement: "Actors, taught not to let any embarrassment show on their faces, put on a mask. I will do the same. So far, I have been a spectator in this theatre which is the world, but I am now about to mount the stage, and I come forward masked."[494]

What is this mask and how are we to distinguish it from the face of Descartes?

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[490] Descartes, *Oevres de Descartes*. Vol. I, 541. Quoted in Ariew's "Descartes and Scholasticism: The Intellectual Background to Descartes' Thought" (*The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, p. 70).

[491] CSMK, p. 108, translation adjusted by me based on Descartes. *Oeuvres et Lettres*. Ed. Andre Bridoux. Dijon: Gallimard, 1953, p. 1016.

[492] To Mersenne, April 1634. Kenny, *Philosophical Letters*, pp. 25-6.

[493] These early thoughts were able to reach us by virtue of being copied by Leibniz form a small Descartes's notebook that has since been lost.

[494] *Preliminaries*. CSM I, p. 2.

At the most basic level the mask is the doing of the sophisticated mortal (although not the sophist). Yet, right away I want to stress that such a mask is by no means the consequence of a fear to expose one's real face:

> Whatever I do I shall not hide myself as if I had committed a crime, but only to avoid disturbance and to keep the liberty I have always enjoyed. I will not be very alarmed if some people know my name; but for the present I prefer people not to speak it at all, so that no expectations may be raised and my work may not fall short of expectation.[495]

This is, of course, a reference to the fact that the first publication of the *Discourse* is anonymous. Descartes-the-mortal, or, better, Descartes-the-shrewd-mortal does not wish to be disturbed. Another example of the same kind of the mask is found in Descartes's withdrawal from Paris and France in general—he wants to secure for himself a comfortable life, a kind of life that would provide him with leisure and peace to think.

Of course, as he himself admits through making the distinction between the mind and the body, philosophical work can be done anywhere in any circumstances. Moreover, the philosophical act is not a consequence of certain actions, such as the lack of disruption. Yet—and here we are moving to the second level of the mask—Descartes chooses the circumstances which would be most conducive to thinking:

> This is why I have retired to the country. In the busiest city in the world I could still have as many hours to myself as I now employ in study, but I could not spend them so usefully if my mind was tired by the attention required by the bustle of life.[496]

These reflections evoke the famous remark of Aristotle:

> Therefore, inasmuch as men philosophized in order to escape ignorance, it is evident that they learned in the pursuit of knowledge, and not for some useful end. This is attested also by the fact that it was only after all the necessities for commodities and enjoyable living had become common that this sort of intelligence [φρόνησις] began to be sought.[497]

As we can see, Aristotle's view considers only the appearances, and does not take into account the fact that the importance of securing the necessities of life is a mask, i.e. itself an appearances.

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[495] To Mersenne, February 27, 1637. Kenny, *Philosophical Letters*, p. 30-32.

[496] To Elizabeth, June 28, 1643. CSMK, p. 227.

[497] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982b. Tr. Hope, p. 7.

The mask of mortal sophistication or shrewdness includes, among other things, the decision to maintain a secure distance from the dungeons of the Inquisition. It also includes the decision to abide by a certain set of rules—the rules that for his time and place include (at least) outward respect for the Catholic religion—if Descartes wants to be published and read by his contemporaries.

For an example let's look at his provisional moral code in the Third Part of the *Discourse on the Method*. This moral code is supposed to enable Descartes "to live as happily as [he] could" during the time of his search for truth or the time of his philosophizing. His first maxim is

> …to obey the laws and customs of my country, holding constantly to the religion in which by God's grace I had been instructed from my childhood, and governing myself in all other matters according to the most moderate and least extreme opinions—the opinions commonly accepted in practice by the most sensible of those with whom I should have to live.[498]

That is, Descartes decides to obey the laws and the customs of the country in which he currently lives even if he does not think that these laws and customs are the best possible ones. For the same reason Descartes decides to adhere to the Catholic religion. I cannot but note that even though Descartes's adherence to the religious principles is a part of his mask, yet he was not an atheist. Just like Socrates was justly accused of not believing in the gods of Athens, so too Descartes does not believe in the Catholic God of the 17th century Europe. However, this is not to say that Descartes does not believe in god, just like it is not the case that Socrates does not acknowledge the divine.[499] Consider the following passage from Leibniz:

> I am told that Descartes established so well the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. I fear that we are deceived by his beautiful words. For the God or perfect being of Descartes is not a God such as one imagines, and as one would wish, that is to say, just and wise, doing all things for the good of the creatures so far as possible, but rather he is something approaching the God of Spinoza, that is to say, the principle of things, and a certain sovereign power called primitive nature, which puts all in action, and does all that can be done…[500]

Mask, thus, is a decision to choose a certain manner of life or a certain way of doing things while knowing that this does not in any way define one as the philosopher, i.e. that this is an appearance designed to control other appearances. Remember from the discussion of the *Sophist* that the philosopher is indistinguishable from the sophist if one is looking at the deeds only. The mask is the realization of this and simultaneously the

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[498] CSM I, p. 122.

[499] Cf. M. F. Burnyeat. "The Impiety of Socrates." *Ancient Philosophy*. Vol. XVII No. 1 (Spring 1997): 1-12.

[500] To Malebranch, June, 1679. Quoted in Allison's lecture on the fourth part of the *Discourse on the Method*, p. 18.

realization that it is necessary to act in some way. As Mamardashvili puts it: "For example, a mask of an honest, well-mannered gentleman. Some activity that I do with exactitude and without evasion and adhere to the mores and customs of my country. This is only a mask, even though as a philosopher I might not believe in these mores and customs."[501]

With this in mind, let's consider the second maxim from the *Discourse*:

> to be as firm and resolute in my actions as I could, and to follow even the *most doubtful opinions* once I had adopted them, with no less constancy than if they had been quite certain… Similarly, since in everyday life we must often act without delay, it is a most certain *truth* that when it is not in our power to discern the *truest opinions*, we must follow the most probable. Even when no opinions appear more probable than any others, we must still adopt some; and having done so we must then regard *them not as doubtful*, from a practical point of view, but *as most true and certain*, on the grounds that the *reason* which made us adopt them is itself true and certain.[502]

In other words, it could have been a different mask. For instance, the mask of somebody who blatantly confronts the Catholic Church by making public his agreement with Galileo.

However, at a more profound level, by putting on a mask Descartes allows himself to think philosophically, and eventually to transform his mortal and the world.

In *Difference and Repetition*, with which I will engage much more fully in the Conclusion, Deleuze asserts: "It may be that the first philosophers still look like priests, or even kings. They borrow the sage's mask—and, as Nietzsche says, how could philosophy not disguise itself in its early stages? Will it ever stop having to disguise itself?"[503]

Deleuze, following Nietzsche, implies that philosophy is still wearing a mask and suggests that such a mask has as its purpose to disguise. I have been arguing that the mask is not intended to disguise or hide anything. Now I will take this claim a step further and argue that the purpose of the mask is rather to reveal, albeit not directly. That is, once again we are reminded of Heraclitus' saying with which I closed the previous chapter: "The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither indicates clearly nor conceals but gives a sign."[504]

Let me quote once again the passage from the *Preliminaries*: "*Actors*, taught not to let any *embarrassment* show on their faces, put on a mask. I will do the same. So far, I have been a spectator in this theatre which is the world, but I am now about to mount the stage, and I come forward masked."[505]

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[501] Мамардашвили, *Картезианские размышления*, pp. 37-38.

[502] CSM I, p. 123, translation adjusted upon recommendation of David Allison, emphasis added.

[503] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 43-44.

[504] Fragment 93. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, p. 43.

[505] CSM I, p. 2, emphasis added.

But is it really embarrassment that the actors hide?

Descartes makes a decision, first, to become a player on the stage of the world, and not just a mere spectator, and, second, to play masked. He becomes a player by virtue of making his work public. But what does it mean? Using the distinction between the mortal, the philosopher, and the sophist, to make the philosopher's work public is to articulate the philosophical intuition in such a way that it may become understandable to the mortal. This, of course, means to engage the sophist and make use of the art of making the articulations seemly. Thus, putting on a mask means agreeing to be (also) the sophist; it is a conscious decision that consists in realizing that Descartes will be destroying, but also creating new configurations of the appearances, or as Deleuze says, recutting the appearances.

So, in part the purpose of the mask is to incite the doubt or bring about the first moment of the method. The mask, then, is that which allows Descartes to do philosophy. For the mask distracts the attention of the mortal, including Descartes himself. Since the mortal's tendency is to particularize thought or imagine it, the mask's function would be to disorient this mortal, to prevent the thought from being turned into a body or reified.

Thus, unlike what Descartes states in the *Preliminaries*, the mask does not hide the embarrassment but rather allows the philosopher to appear. Thus, the mask does not hide Descartes from us, nor does it conceal his thought, but rather makes it possible for us to think it together with him (and, of course, makes it possible for him to think it).

In Ancient Greece the mask was understood precisely in this manner and the cult of Dionysius provides us with the most vivid example of the mask:

> All these empty accessories, the bearded mask, the ivy crown… that represent the god with whom man can merge in a face-to-face encounter of fascination, are props that man himself can don, assuming the marks of the god upon himself, the better to become possessed by him. The whole point of Dionysism, which brings man into immediate contact with the otherness of the divine, is to become other oneself…[506]

To put this in philosophical terms, the mask is what enables the philosopher as philosopher to emerge from the mode of being that is dominated by the mortal aspect. Yet, the mask itself by no means guarantees this. In other words, its status is rather ambivalent:

> …Dionysus introduces into the human life [via the mask that the actors wear] an otherness so complete that it has the power, as does Gorgo,[507] to propel its

[506] Jean-Pierre Vernant and Francoise Frontisi-Ducroux. "Features of the Mask in Ancient Greece." In Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet. *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. New York: Zone Books, 1990, p. 204.

[507] Gorgo is also a mask, as Vernant and Frontisi-Ducroux explain a bit earlier in the essay just quoted.

> enemies toward horror, chaos, death, just as it can also raise its devotees to a state of ecstasy, a full and joyous communion with the divine.[508]

Again, to paraphrase this, the mask can just as easily destroy as it can create. That is why the sophist cannot be seen as the philosopher's benefactor—it is also her threat, this other who is absolutely indispensable for her, as I argued in the previous chapter.

Based on the above let's consider in what sense Descartes can be thought of as the one who revolutionizes Western philosophy.

If we take a look at the third maxim from Descarters's provisional moral code we will find the following determination:

> to try always to conquer myself rather than fortune, and change my desires rather than the order of the world. In general I would become accustomed to believing that nothing lies entirely within our power except our thoughts, so that after doing our best in dealing with matters external to us, whatever we fail to achieve is absolutely impossible so far as we are concerned.[509]

This maxim relies on the idea of generosity—the idea that plays a central role in both the *Passions* and in Descartes's persona. A little earlier in the text Descartes asserts: "My design has never extended beyond trying to reform my own thoughts and trying to build upon a foundation which is all my own."[510]

The above quotations reflect what I have been calling the moment of the philosopher-mortal—the moment of change and transformation of the world. What they make clear is that such change can only occur through *my own* transformation of *my own* mortal.[511] As the philosopher, one can transform or revolutionize the world only through oneself, only by exposing or putting oneself at stake.[512]

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[508] *Ibid*., p. 206.

[509] CSM I, p. 123.

[510] *Ibid*., p. 118, translation adjusted by me.

[511] As we will shortly see in the Conclusion, Deleuze too conceives of philosophy as that which transforms. However, he prioritizes the last moment of the method, which is evident in that he defines philosophy in terms of art or τέχνη. Allison in his lectures attributes a similar notion of philosophy to Descartes. Cf. esp. his second lecture: "…philosophy henceforth [from Descartes on] becomes instrumental." Allison argues that with Descartes philosophy becomes an art of controlling nature. Badiou too denies the second moment of the method or the philosopher proper when he claims that there are no philosophical events, but rather philosophy merely names the events that happen in art, politics, love and science.

[512] Anzaldúa, who is one of the most vivid examples of such philosophical transformation of our own century, writes: "The meaning and worth of my writing is measured by how much I put myself on the line and how much nakedness I achieve." From "Speaking in tongues: A letter to Third World women writers." In *Women writing resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean*. Ed. Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez. Cambridge: South End Press, 2003, p. 88.

In other words, the philosopher's response is that any change consists in the change of thinking. *My* thinking. This, of course, goes back to the structure of the act of the *cogito*: "I think, therefore I am" requires my engagement with this intuition, only I can utter it, only *I* can occupy the place of the *cogito*. And in the same way only *I* can transform my own thinking, and I can *only* transform my own thinking. Because creating conditions for transformation is already a transformation, but only in my own case. Thus, the second moment of the method, or the philosopher happens, but the third one can be brought about through the philosopher's own effort, and is certain to be effective only with her. Undoubtedly, I can help create the conditions in which the transformation of others will be more likely to occur, but there can never be certainty in such transformation. Ultimately, only they themselves can change their thinking just like (and because) only they themselves can think or be.

Let us consider a passage from the second part of the *Discourse*:

> Admittedly, we never see people pulling down all the houses of a city for the sole purpose of rebuilding them in a different style or to make the streets more attractive; but we do see many individuals having their houses pulled down in order to rebuild them, some even being forced to do so when the houses are in danger of falling down and their foundations are insecure. This example convinced me that it would be unreasonable for an individual to plan to reform a state by changing it from the foundations up and overturning it in order to set it up again; *or again for him to plan to reform the body of the sciences or the established order of teaching them in the schools*. But regarding the opinions to which I hitherto given credence, I thought that I could not do better than undertake to get rid of them, all at one go, in order to replace them afterwards with better ones, or with the same ones once I had adjusted them to the level of reason.[513]

Descartes clearly states that he has no aspirations to reform anything but himself: "I cannot by any means approve of those meddlesome and restless [spirits] who, called neither by birth nor by fortune to the management of public affairs, are yet forever thinking up some new reform."[514]

Here Descartes claims that he decides to change his own "desires rather than the order of the world," and yet he is the one who has changed the world beyond recognition. As I have been arguing, unlike what might seem from the first glance, Descartes is indeed appearing unmasked in the above claims, for he is speaking from the perspective of the philosopher only. The mask is put on (both by him and by us) when he appears to be a revolutionary. One such instance is his decision to write a textbook that would revolutionize the material taught in the Schools, i.e. to replace the texts based on Aristotle.[515]

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[513] CSM I, p. 117, emphasis added.

[514] *Ibid*., p. 118.

[515] *Ibid*., p. 177. Cf. letter to Mersenne, 31 December, 1640, and to Huygens, 31 January, 1642.

So, there is only one reliable criterion of truth available both to us and to Descartes: clarity and distinctness. That is, everything that we can also know by intuition or understand through our own effort of thinking is not a mask. Including the criterion itself.

> I would like to assure those who are over-diffident about their powers that there is nothing in my writings which they are not capable of completely understanding provided they take the trouble to examine them. I would, however, also like to warn the others that even the most excellent minds will need a great deal of time and attention in order to look at all the things which I set myself to include.[516]

In other words, whether we think highly of our intellectual abilities or not, we will have to engage with the writings of Descartes in order to understand what he thinks. We will have to test on our own whether his ideas are worth anything. That is why the method from the Discourse is only a suggestion.

In this sense there is indeed no history of philosophy, and everything ever written is a mask, i.e. Descartes is first of all not a philosopher but a sophist.

Consider Descartes's third rule from the *Regulae*: "…we ought to investigate what we can clearly and evidently intuit or deduce with certainty, and not what other people [including Descartes] have thought or what we ourselves conjecture. For knowledge can be attained in no other way."[517]

For the same reason the bodily memory is nothing compared to the ability to keep an intuition in mind or to think passionately. Indeed, Descartes is not dissimulating when he writes:

> For it is not enough to have a good mind [*l'esprit*]; the main thing is to apply it well…. For my part, I have never presumed my mind [*esprit*] to be in any way more perfect than that of the ordinary man; indeed I have often wished to have as quick a wit [*la pensée*], or as sharp and distinct an imagination, or as ample or prompt a *memory* [*la mémoire aussi ample, ou aussi présente*] as some others….[518]

Now we understand how Descartes's thought is simultaneously revolutionary or new, and also the same thought that is "remembered" by Parmenides or Augustine.

> I am obliged to you for informing me of the passages in St. Augustine that can help in authorizing my opinions. Some other friends of mine have already done something similar.[519] And I take great satisfaction in the fact that my thoughts

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[516] Preface to the French edition of the *Principles of Philosophy*. CSM I, p. 185.

[517] CSM I, p. 13.

[518] *Discourse on Method*. CSM I, pp. 111-112, translation adjusted upon the recommendation of David Allison, emphasis mine.

[519] Cf. To *Clovius*, November 14, 1640.

> agree with those of so sainted and excellent a person. But I am not at all of the habit of thought of those who desire that their opinions appear *new*. On the contrary, I accommodate mine to those of others insofar as truth allows me to do so.[520]

Descartes even admits that the *cogito* is "something so simple and so natural in itself to infer that one exists from the fact that one is doubting, that it might have come from anybody's pen."[521]

So, at a first glance it might seem that putting on a mask is precisely the opposite of what philosophy is about. And yet, Descartes, *the* Modern *philosopher*, and, perhaps, the most straightforward and the most candid Modern philosopher, philosophizes masked. Descartes strives for clarity—the clarity not only of the understanding, but also of his writing style. Yet it is precisely this sophistical nature of his work that makes Descartes strive for clarity.

In other words, in trying to understand the mask we can speak about the Inquisition, the Catholic doctrine, etc., but all of this is only considering Descartes from the perspective of the timeline, or as a clever mortal. However, Descartes's mask is actually directed against this mortal, against the tendency to comply, against the fear of philosophical authority, against the possibility that the history of philosophy becomes thought's enemy.[522]

Conclusion

It is doubtless that Descartes is thinking being or is the philosopher in the strict sense regardless of whether or not he managed to think through all of its features or maintain his attention with respect to all aspects of his intuition. So, for instance, we are confronted with the worrisome views on animals, or with his attempt to provide arguments for the existence of God. Yet, Descartes himself fully realizes that this does not devalue his thought: "if somebody somewhere performed an act of philosophical thought, then this act contains everything that can ever be in philosophical thinking."[523] Indeed, it has not been my goal to prove that Descartes is correct in all his assertion or articulations of being, but rather that he is an originary thinker and conceives metaphysics

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[520] To Mesland, May 2, 1644. *Oeuvres et letters*, p. 1163, emphasis added.

[521] To *Clovius*, November 14, 1640. *Oeuvres et lettres*, p. 1097.

[522] A mask does not (cannot) disguise, since, as Wittgenstein said, everything is in the open, we cannot hide anything, rather, we are just inattentive enough to notice. The mask is what can help us develop such attentiveness. Thus, a mask is primarily a mask for oneself.

[523] Мамардашвили, *Картезианские размышления*, p. 80.

in the originary sense. Thus, his thought should not be reduced to its historiographic account.

Let me explain what I mean using Descartes's own example from Meditation Six. There he explains that once we thought the triangle we really did think it, i.e. we understood what the triangle is. In addition, once the act of thinking occurred it is irreversible, or, undeniable. The fact that we thought the triangle means that even if somebody where to come centuries later and discover its new properties—let's say by articulating a new theorem about it—there is a sense in which he or she wouldn't have thought anything different from us, that is, both of us would have thought exactly the same thought. And the difference of the manner in which it is expressed now counts only in a certain sense. Thus, from the angle of the mind, or the philosopher as such, there is nothing new just as there is nothing old. There is no history of philosophy—only the now. It is only from the angle of the philosopher-mortal that the context becomes significant and philosophy can be said to have history, yet such history needs to be clearly distinguished from mere historiography, which the sophist destroys. That is, we encounter once again Permenidean oneness: the appearances too are.

In other words, philosophy has two kinds of history: the one that maps onto the factual or, as Descartes would say, the bodily memory, and the other that reflects the philosopher's desire to keep in mind the intuition, and consists in engaging the mortal.

Conclusion

Deleuze the Sophist-Philosopher

There are two main reasons for why this dissertation ends with a chapter on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. First, Deleuze represents a tendency of recent philosophical thought that has as its goal the reversal of Western metaphysics. That is, in many ways Deleuze represents contemporary philosophy and especially recent French thought insofar as this thought reflects on the problem, inspired by Heidegger, of the end of philosophy as metaphysics. As a result of this reflection, quite a few 20th century thinkers including Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jacques Derrida, and Deleuze himself undertake the task of undermining or overturning the hegemony of Western metaphysics. Even though Deleuze stands quite apart from these other thinkers, he also epitomizes them in many ways. For the purpose of deepening and developing the larger argument of my dissertation I need to confront this contemporary trend loosely unified under the label of "deconstructing Western metaphysics." I do this through the work of Deleuze because, and this is my second reason for focusing on Deleuze's work, I think that he is one of the most philosophically creative thinkers of our times. The kind of creativity that we find in Deleuze is indispensable for any act of philosophizing. Moreover, through his writings Deleuze establishes the conditions necessary to provoke philosophical thought in his readers, that is, there is a sophistical element to Deleuze's thought. These two elements—Deleuze's philosophical creativity and the destructive aspect of his work—can be harmoniously unified to yield the philosopher-sophist who is able to effectively re-create the world through his writings. However, such unification needs to be done by us. In other words, the thought of Deleuze, like that of any other philosopher, is prone to misinterpretations, including Deleuze's own misinterpretation of himself. Hence, the overabundance of the literature that merely promotes a caricature of Deleuze.

In the previous chapter I explored the philosophical persona of Descartes showing that there is a sense in which philosophy is a-historical and yet, that the circumstances of thinking are important. In this Conclusion I will further substantiate this claim by considering a contemporary philosophical position and a controversial one at that.

In the process of such an exploration the previous three chapters will be brought to their completion. That is, examining the ontological suppositions of Deleuze as well as his notion of philosophy I will show how this contemporary thinker who purports to reverse Western metaphysics is in a certain, very specific, sense actually continuing the Western philosophical tradition.

In the Introduction I argued that philosophy as metaphysics cannot be over. In the preceding three chapters I explored the sense in which I understand this claim to be true, i.e. I elucidated the idea that every philosophical act begins with intuition in which the oneness of thinking and being comes to the fore. Next I investigated philosophy's place

or the question of who the philosopher is, and finally I looked into the issue of philosophy's time or the relationship of philosophy to its own history. In this Conclusion I will confirm the arguments developed so far using Deleuze's thought. The fact that quite often Deleuze is seen as being incommensurable or, at least, radically opposed to the traditional philosophy of the West, to which Parmenides, Plato, and Descartes belong will render my argument even stronger. In other words, in this chapter I will show how Deleuze is, in fact, thinking the same thought as those before him even though the circumstances of his thinking have doubtlessly changed. In doing this I will almost exclusively limit myself to two of his books: *Difference and Repetition* and *What is Philosophy?*.

Deleuze's Problem

I will begin by exploring some of the fundamental principles underlying Deleuze's thought by focusing on *Difference and Repetition*, although I will also consider several key passages from his *Bergsonism* and *The Logic of Sense*. Deleuze's notion of the philosophical problem will serve as an entryway into this exploration.

According to Deleuze, philosophy happens through posing problems, that is, the most important philosophical work is accomplished when we formulate a question that needs to be answered. This involves recognizing the fact that a certain question has been poorly posed before, thus poorly understood and poorly answered. Such re-articulation of the problem requires creating new concepts and consequently, according to Deleuze's definition of philosophy, constitutes the philosophical act par excellence. Deleuze claims that in philosophy "concepts are only created as a function of problems which are thought to be badly understood or badly posed (pedagogy of the concept)."[524]

Deleuze develops his notion of the problem from his encounter with the writings of Bergson. In his book *Bergsonism* Deleuze quotes the following passage from Bergson's work *The Creative Mind*

> The truth is that in philosophy and even elsewhere it is a question of *finding* the problem and consequently of *posing* it, even more than of solving it. For a speculative problem is solved as soon as it is properly stated… But stating a problem is not simply uncovering, it is inventing. Discovery, or uncovering, has to do with what already exists, actually or virtually; it was therefore certain to happen sooner or later. Invention gives being to what did not exist; it might never have happened. Already in mathematics, and still more in metaphysics, the effort

[524] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 16.

> of invention consists most often in raising the problem, in creating the terms in which it is stated.[525]

Thus, according to Bergson, finding a problem and posing it constitutes a truly philosophical act, and perhaps even *the* philosophical act, since all the solutions or the consequent philosophical inventions draw their force from the creation of the terms in which the problem is posed. And so, we can understand both *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*—and perhaps even all of Deleuze's work—as his attempt to formulate a problem of this kind, especially if we, like Deleuze, take the process of formulation to be simultaneous with the process of solving that problem: "all concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated or understood as their solution emerges."[526] Another way in which Deleuze understands the act of formulating the problem to be *the* philosophical act is by focusing on the fact that problems generate *truth*: "What is essential is that there occurs at the heart of problems a genesis of truth, a production of the true in thought. Problems are the differential elements in thought, the genetic elements in the true."[527] Since the philosophically creative aspect of Deleuze's early books has its source in the problem that motivates his work, then clarifying with what problem Deleuze is working will provide us with an entryway into his position. Of course, I will be focusing on merely one of the many philosophical problems that inspire and guide Deleuze's work. As he himself admits, problems are never isolated, but rather always exist *as* intersections or *at* intersections with other problems: "A concept requires not only a problem through which it recasts or replaces the earlier concepts but a junction of problems where it combines with other coexisting concepts."[528] But conceptualizing Deleuze's project as a whole from just one angle or as a response to one problem in no way diminishes the project's depth or breadth: even though in doing this I cannot but omit many crucial features of Deleuze's position I will nevertheless gain access to some of its most basic principles, that is, to use Deleuze's own terminology, I will be able to enter Deleuze's plane of immanence and assess its structure.

I will formulate the problem of the "early" Deleuze in the following fashion: How do we notice the emergence of the new or the different (thought)? How is it possible to conceive a metaphysics that allows Difference to be?[529]

In the chapter of *Difference and Repetition* entitled "The Image of Thought" Deleuze discusses the illicit presuppositions of his predecessors and proposes his own

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[525] Deleuze. *Bergsonism*. New York: Zone Books, 1991, p. 15. Citing *The Creative Mind*. Tr. Mabelle L. Andison. Greenwood Press: Westport, 1946. French title is *La pensée et le mouvant*, pp. 51-52.

[526] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 16.

[527] Gilles Deleuze. *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 162. The kind of truth that Deleuze means here is what I have been calling the appearances made seemly according to truth. I will return to this issue a little later.

[528] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 18.

[529] The question is related to Heidegger's question, discussed in the Introduction, of whether it is possible to "climb beyond metaphysics" without falling back. Cf. section one of the Introduction.

theory of the emergence of a new thought. In it Deleuze argues that certain unacknowledged presuppositions stifle the projects of his philosophical ancestors. He outlines eight such postulates or presuppositions, and claims that all of them share a common feature—they privilege the Same or the Identical. He argues that only by subverting or reversing these presuppositions can we notice the new and conceptualize the Difference. In other words, Deleuze wants to expose and thus to render impotent the obstructions that prevent us from intuiting and thinking the new.

So, Deleuze's problem can be further understood in the following way: the history of Western thinking established the Same as the paradigm or the measure of thoughts and beings, and therefore made it impossible for itself to think or create new concepts, i.e. to notice or allow for the other to itself. In seeing the world in terms of resemblances, analogies, identities and oppositions[530] we prevent ourselves from experiencing that which is unlike what we already know. Thus, Deleuze's task is to reverse the metaphysical situation, i.e. instead of asserting the being of the Same he wants to affirm the Different as that which is, consequently allowing for the emergence of the new thought or of the other. To relate this to my discussion in Chapter 2, Deleuze sees as problematic that the philosopher qua philosopher sees everybody else as the philosopher, and does not notice the difference between herself and the mortal, or herself and the sophist. Deleuze's goal, then, is to remedy this situation.

Consider the following formulation of Deleuze's problem in the *Logic of Sense*. In the paragraphs that precede it Deleuze discusses the series that border the signal-sign systems[531] and the fact that there is a resemblance between these series. He assures us that this kind of resemblance is not in itself problematic.

> The *problem* is rather in the status and the position of this resemblance. Let us consider the two formulas: 'only that which resembles differs' and 'only differences can resemble each other'. These are two distinct readings of the world: one invites us to think difference from the standpoint of a previous similitude or identity; whereas the other invites us to think similitude and even identity as the product of a deep disparity. The first reading precisely defines the world of copies or representations; it posits the world as icon. The second, contrary to the first, defines the world of simulacra; it posits the world itself as phantasm.[532]

As is clear from the larger context of this quote, Deleuze wants to align himself with the second formulation and sees Western philosophical tradition as, for the most part, embracing the first possibility (some notable exceptions to this are Nietzsche, Duns Scotus and, to a large extent, Henri Bergson).

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[530] According to Deleuze, these are the "four principal aspects to 'reason' in so far as it is the medium of representation" (*Difference and Repetition,* p. 29).

[531] The sign that flashes between the series gives rise, according to Deleuze, to the problem itself: "Problems and their symbolic fields stand in a relationship with signs. It is the signs which 'cause problems' and are developed in a symbolic field" (*Difference and Repetition*, p. 164).

[532] Deleuze. *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, pp. 261-262, emphasis added.

What this passage shows is that Deleuze sees as *problematic* an understanding of the relationship between the Same and the Different that dominates Western philosophy. Therefore, he sets out to rethink this relationship, and for him this entails the *reversal* of the status quo: instead of having Identity as the origin he posits Difference as the origin and in so doing claims to solve the problem of noticing or allowing for Difference. Here we can see at work the Bergson-inspired principle that I mentioned above: formulating a problem is simultaneously providing a solution for it. Seeing as a problem the expulsion or destruction of the Different under the hegemony of the Same, Deleuze's task is to bring about "the rule" of the Different, that is, to radically reconfigure Western philosophical tradition. We can see that in formulating the problem in this way Deleuze also preconfigures its solution: to prevent the philosopher qua philosopher from being ignorant of the Difference he decided to expel or demote her altogether and instead to posit the sophist as ontologically primary—the act that, as I have argued earlier, leads to the emergence of the semblance of non-being.

However, I want to stress that Deleuze's problem is poorly understood and poorly formulated. And at times Deleuze is quite aware of this himself. Of course, the hegemony of the Same is most undesirable. However, originary metaphysics does not entail the imposition of such sameness and thus need not be destroyed through the imposition of Difference. Instead, what Deleuze is struggling against is the misunderstanding or misunderstandings of metaphysics that does privilege the Same or the historiographic metaphysics that misconceives the one. Thus, the reversal proposed or enacted by Deleuze is intended to destroy not the originary, but the historiographic metaphysics reified by the mortal, and thus, is one of the most straightforward examples of sophistry. Moreover, the reversals, substituting Difference for Identity, reinforce dichotomies and eventually only support the hierarchies they intended to demolish. Deleuze, I am convinced, is well aware of that.

Indeed, there are several notable exceptions to this purely sophistical attitude taken on by Deleuze, and in a moment I will point to a very significant passage in *Difference and Repetition* that proves that Deleuze is not simply being inconsistent or unthoughtful in proposing the reversal of the oppositions mentioned above, but rather, that the reversal that he performs is a sophistical trick (*apate*). But before I discuss this, let me show how I would reply to Deleuze's assertion from *The Logic of Sense* about the two readings of the world (thinking difference from identity, and thinking identity as a product of difference), and then I will draw on Deleuze's own writings to support my reformulation of his problem.

Considering the alternatives that Deleuze presents in the passage quoted above we need to admit the there is a third—much more accurate and fruitful—formulation of the world. It involves thinking difference not from similitude or identity, but rather within oneness. For oneness, as I show in Chapter 1, is different from both similitude and identity. The axiom "All Is One" does not rule out differences but makes it possible to think them in the first place, and to think them, moreover, without reducing them to identity. For if, for example, there were no oneness of thinking and being it would not be possible to think at all, but, obviously, thinking is different from being, and

contemplating how they are one enables us to see the difference.[533] Deleuze is simply misunderstanding—or, rather, pretending to do so—the Parmenidean claim about the oneness of thinking and being by taking it to entail the identity between these two. But unity or oneness conceived in the manner in which, for instance, Parmenides does it in his *Poem* is necessary to maintain differences. These differences are internal to oneness without being identical to it and to each other. In thinking about the world philosophically we must begin with oneness but this oneness is not really *of*, but *with* difference, that is, this oneness does not repress, but rather allows for difference. Such an understanding of oneness is fundamentally different from the concept of the Same that the mortal understanding of philosophy inspired or promoted in the West—the concept that, at least implicitly, supported the political, economic, and cultural hegemony of the "First World." In other words, it is true that the West tends to forget, whether intentionally or not, that oneness is the oneness with difference, and Deleuze is correct in pointing out how disastrous such forgetting is. And yet, the fact that we have forgotten and are still suffering consequences of this fateful act does not diminish the strength or validity of the third formulation or the third way of reading the world proposed by me and omitted by Deleuze in the passage quoted above. Namely, the claim that *Only that which is one can let differences emerge—differences which resemble neither the one itself, nor each other*. Or else, only the underlying oneness can sustain radical difference. It is such a notion of oneness that I find in Parmenides, Plato, and Descartes, arguing that it is an axiom of philosophy.

I suggest, then, that instead of claiming that Western metaphysics tried to establish the hegemony of the Same, and thus needs to be reversed or deconstructed, we need to notice that throughout its history Western metaphysics has been trying to articulate the kind of oneness that allows for differences to emerge. The problem—and now it is my problem—is to bring to the surface this aspect of Western metaphysics. Metaphorically speaking, the problem is to enter what looks like the edifice of "high" civilization and see that it is only the multiplicity of nomads' tents. However, it is also to see that each different tent forms a unity with all others as well as with the surrounding landscape, or the world at large. In other words, the problem is to see again—but simultaneously anew because from our own place and time, that is, with a different effort of thought—to see again how oneness is complicated with difference, how thinking and being are not identical, but rather different while being one. The problem is also to see the oneness of the Western philosophical tradition, the oneness that makes it possible for us to think new thoughts.

As I pointed out, this is my problem. But I am convinced that ultimately this is also Deleuze's problem, and the solution for it that I just outlined and that I will further develop in this chapter would perfectly satisfy Deleuze's philosophical ambitions. But before I show this, let us consider what Deleuze purports to achieve through adhering to the second formulation, i.e. what he sees as being the result of his reversal of metaphysics: "So 'to reverse Platonism' means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm

[533] Cf. Parmenides, *Poem*, B3, as well as my exposition of oneness in the second part of Chapter 1. The unity of thinking and being is a paradigmatic instance of oneness, and on its basis we can understand the kind of unity that, for instance, the philosopher and the sophist can have.

their rights among icons and copies."[534] Under my formulation of the world, the simulacra, or the appearances as I call them in my first chapter, are indeed legitimate. In fact, their affirmation is absolutely necessary for the being of the world—there would be no world without the appearances. They are our creations, and the "aggressiveness"[535] of their chaos continually forces us to order and reorder them, i.e. to reaffirm or rearticulate the oneness of the world. In fact, Deleuze implicitly endorses this aspect of my (third) formulation when he writes: "In order to speak of simulacra, it is necessary for the heterogeneous series to be really *internalized* in the *system*, comprised or complicated in the chaos."[536] The heterogeneous series or differenciations are internal to the system even though they themselves emerge in the chaos. Thus, after all, Deleuze is envisioning a system, even if this is a system of simulacra, that is, a heterogeneous and complicated system.

As I have been arguing, we do not have to choose between either the totalizing sameness or the complete denial of any unity. I have also suggested that Deleuze, in fact, would be quite satisfied with the third reading of the world that postulates oneness. I would like now to draw attention to the passage from *Difference and Repetition* in which Deleuze explicitly acknowledges his commitment to such oneness. In this passage he discusses Nietzsche's notion of the eternal return, and especially the idea that it is the eternal return of the same. Deleuze is quick to caution us that there are at least *three* senses of the terms "the same," "the identical," and "the similar."[537] The first sense is by now the familiar notion of totalizing identity. In this sense the same is considered to be the principle, or the cause that generates the different. Deleuze claims that if we are understanding the same in such a way, then we are simply perpetuating "the greatest and the longest *error*." Apart from this first meaning of the same, we can also take the same to be the effect or the consequence of difference. Deleuze explains that in this case we "retroject" identity on "the originary difference" because we are overcome by an illusion. These two senses are interconnected, since the second one, the illusion, is often the source of the first one, the error. The first two senses of the same are simply two versions of the Same of Western metaphysics that Deleuze sets out to destroy.

But finally and most importantly,

> in the third sense, the same and the similar are indistinguishable from the eternal return itself. They do not exist prior to the eternal return…. The same is said of that which differs and remains different. The eternal return is the same of the different, the one *of* the multiple, the resemblant of the dissimilar.[538]

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[534] Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p. 262.

[535] Cf. *ibid*., p. 261.

[536] *Ibid*., emphasis added.

[537] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 125-126.

[538] *Ibid.*, p. 126, emphasis added. Here is the original French of the last sentence: "L'éternel retour est le même *du* différent, l'un *du* multiple, le ressemblant *du* dissemblable" (*Différence et repetition*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003, p. 165).

This distinction between three senses of the term "the same," and Deleuze's explicit preference of the third one, confirms the claim that I have been making about the third possibility, or the third formula of understanding the world, in which the oneness of what is allows the differences to be. We are beginning to see, then, that Deleuze is in agreement with Parmenides about there being one—the one of or with the different.

Let me develop my argument even further by exploring Deleuze's ontological commitments as expressed through the notion of the univocity of being.[539]

> In effect, difference ceases to be reflexive and recovers an effectively real concept only to the extent that it designates catastrophes: either breaks of continuity in the series of resemblances or impassible fissures between the analogical structures. It ceases to be reflexive only in order to be catastrophic. No doubt it cannot be the one without the other. But does not difference as catastrophe precisely bear witness to an *irreducible ground* which continues to act under the apparent equilibrium of organic representation?[540]

In this rhetorical manner Deleuze ends his section on Aristotle's understanding of difference, of which he is extremely critical, and prepares to launch into an exposition of Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche whom he sees as prefiguring his notion of the univocity of being. The sentences that open this section are especially remarkable:

> There has only ever been *one* ontological proposition: *Being is univocal*. There has only ever been one ontology, that of Duns Scotus, which gave being a single voice. We say Duns Scotus because he was the one who elevated univocal being to the highest point of subtlety, albeit at the price of abstraction. However, from Parmenides to Heidegger it is the *same voice* which is taken up, in an echo which itself forms the whole deployment of the univocal.[541]

This quotation, I think, speaks for itself. What is so striking about it is that, whether or not we agree with Deleuze that it was Duns Scotus who "elevated univocal being to the highest degree of subtlety," in the span of these three sentences a very powerful claim for oneness is made. According to Deleuze, the whole of Western metaphysics—"from Parmenides to Heidegger"—takes up the *same* voice! What better evidence can there be for the fact that Deleuze recognizes and corroborates the notion of oneness that I have been developing here from the work of Parmenides?

"Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself."[542] How can we understand these

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[539] Descartes too has leanings towards Scotism, as Roger Ariew argues in *Descartes and the Last Scholastics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), cf. especially his second chapter. In fact, this is quite obvious in Descartes's notion of substance discussed in the previous chapter.

[540] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 35, emphasis added.

[541] *Ibid*.

[542] *Ibid*., p. 36, emphasis added.

words "of difference itself" in the context of Chapter 2? Or, how can we understand "the one of the different?" This is the level of the exalted philosopher, i.e. the state in which we recognize and actualize the one with difference, when we reached the point of including the other. In claiming the one of/with the different we are not claiming the oneness of the appearances—this would indeed entail a repressive oneness—but rather the oneness of the appearances and being. In other words, we are claiming that being itself is difference in the sense that being is being *and* the appearances. That is, paradoxically, being is not identical to itself

In the terminology of the second chapter, the sophist is the one who both brings out the differences, and also exaggerates them. The philosopher is the one who thinks being, and thus emphasizes oneness, although to be seemly this oneness always has to be the oneness of differences. If Deleuzian Difference is just another name for the oneness, then we are confronted with a situation in which the sophist tries to create the semblance of non-being but ends up only confirming what is. Deleuze who proclaims the reign of the Different is Deleuze-the-sophist determined to confuse us. We have to admit that he does make it seem like his Difference in Itself disrupts the whole of Western metaphysics. However, considered more attentively we see that it disrupts only the historiographic notion of such metaphysics, and, in fact, reinforces a non-hierarchical one that allows for *everything* to be.

Deleuze writes: "No doubt there is still hierarchy and distribution in univocal being, in relation to the individuating factors and their sense, but distribution and even hierarchy have two completely different, irreconcilable acceptations."[543] In one sense hierarchy proceeds by "fixed and proportional determinations."[544] The kind of hierarchy favored by Deleuze is likened by him to nomadic distribution: "It is not a matter of being which is distributed according to the requirements of representation, but of all things being divided up within being in the univocity of simple presence (the One—All)."[545] It is such distribution that in the second chapter I called the subtle hierarchy.

Deleuze continues with an even more startling assertion that "…*equal being* is immediately present in *everything*, without the mediation or intermediary, even though things reside unequally in this equal being. A little further he explains: "With univocity… it is being which is Difference, in the sense that it is said of difference. Moreover, it is not we who are univocal in a Being which is not; it is we and our individuality which remains equivocal in and for a univocal Being."[546] Here Deleuze is especially close to the Parmenidean idea that the different appearances are one insofar as they are. Deleuze's point in the following quotation regarding the absence of division within being further reinforces the univocity of his position and that expressed in Parmenides' *Poem*

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[543] *Ibid*.

[544] *Ibid*.

[545] *Ibid*., p. 37.

[546] *Ibid*., p. 39.

> From Duns Scotus to Spinoza, the univocal position has always rested upon two fundamental theses. According to one, there are indeed forms of being, but contrary to what is suggested by the categories, these forms involve no division within being or plurality of ontological senses. According to the other, that of which being is said is repartitioned according to essentially mobile individuating differences which necessarily endow 'each one' with a plurality of modal significations.[547]

As we will see, this "mobility" of what I have been calling appearances is precisely what allows the philosopher to re-create the world.

On the next page Deleuze reiterates the same point: univocity "has two completely opposing aspects according to which being is said 'in all manners' in a single same sense, but is said thereby of that which differs, is said of a difference which is itself always mobile and displaced *within* being."[548] In other words, Deleuze himself conceives the oneness that allows for the differences within it, and thus himself endorses the third possibility of understanding the world.

It is not surprising, thus, that in the same section of *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze mentions Parmenides and his account of the ways. Here is what he writes: "There are not two 'paths,' as Parmenides' poem suggests, but a single 'voice' of Being, which includes all its modes, including the most diverse, the most varied, the most differenciated."[549] As I have argued in Chapter 1, for Parmenides too there is only one path or one way—the way of the *is*, which, in fact, includes *everything*.

In other words, what we find is a striking convergence between Deleuze's radical reversal of metaphysics and the source from which this metaphysics ensued. That is, even though the circumstances of Parmenides' and Deleuze's thinking are, to use a Deleuzeanism, "most differenciated," the philosophical insight reached by both is indeed one. That is, we witness here that philosophy indeed has no history understood as a temporal progression or a record of such progression: there is no development with philosophy, and Deleuze is thinking the same thought as Parmenides.

Another confirmation of this fact comes from Deleuze's notion of non-being. Consider the following passage from *Difference and Repetition*:

> Being is also non-being, *but non-being is not the being of the negative*; rather, it is the being of the problematic, the being of problem and question. Difference is not the negative; on the contrary, non-being is Difference: *heteron* not *enantion*. For this reason non-being should rather be written (non)-being, or, better still, ?-being. In this sense it turns out that the infinitive, the *esse*, designates less a proposition than the interrogation to which the proposition is supposed to respond. This (non)-being is the differential element in which affirmation, as multiple affirmation, finds the principle of its genesis. As for negation, this is only the

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[547] *Ibid*., p. 303.

[548] *Ibid*., p. 304, emphasis added.

[549] *Ibid*., p. 36. Here Deleuze plays on the fact that in French the word for "roads" (voies) and the word for "voice" (voix) are homonyms.

> shadow of the highest principle, the shadow of the difference alongside the affirmation produced. Once we confuse non-being with the negative, contradiction is inevitably carried into being; but contradiction is only the appearance or the epiphenomenon, the illusion projected by the problem, the shadow of a question which remains open and of a being that corresponds as such to that question (before it has been given a response).[550]

Being, claims Deleuze, is also non-being. But what he calls here "non-being" is not the road, down which the goddess of the *Poem* forbade us to travel, but merely the semblance of that road. It is the disruption or the confusion caused by the sophist—the disruption that eventually only reinforces being. So, what looks like non-being is a mere shadow, an illusion created by the sophist. It is what the mortal mistakenly takes for what is not.

This claim in Deleuze is actually consistent with the Visitor's discussion of non-being in the *Sophist*. As I have been arguing in Chapter 2, the Visitor creates the semblance of non-being, purporting to destroy Parmenides, and yet, according to the Visitor, what is not is not the contrary, but rather the other (heteron) to what is.[551]

As we can see, here again Deleuze is perfectly consistent with both Parmenides' and Plato's ontological position as it has been developed in the preceding chapters.

Wholeness of the Concept or the Definition of Philosophy

To give my argument more depth I will trace out the notion of oneness at a different level of Deleuze's thought, namely, I will show that this notion underlies Deleuze's definition of philosophy. If in the previous section I was mainly relying on his early work I will now turn to one of his last books. Thus while discussing Deleuze's notion of oneness, I will also expose a certain continuity or unity in Deleuze's own writings, be it unity with differences.[552]

"The question *what is philosophy?* can perhaps be posed only late in life, with the arrival of old age and the time for speaking concretely."[553] Thus begins Deleuze and Guattari's book entitled *What Is Philosophy?*. However, they quickly admit that they "cannot claim such a status. Simply, the time has come for us to ask what philosophy is.

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[550] *Ibid*., p. 64.

[551] Cf. *Sophist*, 257b, and especially 258c-259c.

[552] In Deleuzian scholarship it is customary to distinguish between the "early" thought of Deleuze as it is primarily expressed in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* and such later books as *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. Although I am not contesting this distinction I also do not want us to overestimate its significance.

[553] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 1.

We had never stopped asking this question previously, and we already had the answer, which has not changed: philosophy is the art of forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts."[554] Let's explore what exactly Deleuze's definition of philosophy as the art of creating concepts means by considering his understanding of the concept.[555]

Every concept, according to Deleuze, is a whole even if it is "a fragmentary whole."[556] In this formulation we encounter, although at a different intensity, so to speak, the idea that I have been exploring in the previous section, i.e. the idea that the one lets the differences be. The concept, according to Deleuze, is comprised of components, and in this sense every concept is a multiplicity, that is, it is made up and defined by differences. And yet the concept "renders [its] components inseparable *within itself*."[557] That is, the concept is defined by its *internal* differences, and therefore is that which enables their oneness.

How is this possible? What constitutes the unity of all the multiplicities that comprise a given concept? It cannot simply be the new name that this chaotic compilation of components acquires. Instead, the wholeness of the concept comes from the oneness of the *problem* which necessitates the concept's creation. It is the problem that gives oneness to the multiple and fragmentary chaos of the multiplicity of the concept's components: "all concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated or understood as their solution emerges."[558] Moreover, because the creation of the concept or the solution of the problem is simultaneous with the formulation of the problem, we also get the basic oneness of the two—the unity that does not reduce one to the other, but allows each to assert its difference in oneness. The difference between the problem and the solution is that the solution is an ordered chaos, or appearances made seemly, whereas the problem is that which orders, or provides the basis for this unity or seemliness. Therefore, the problem is not merely one of the appearances, but instead is related to the event.[559] But even though the form, to use Deleuze's term, of the problem is different from the form of the appearances that are articulated in the problem's solution, because of the univocity of being both of the problem and the appearances are in the same way. Hence their oneness. In addition, the appearances that are ordered by the problem in the solution constitute a one without losing their differences, or without ceasing to be the appearances.

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[554] *Ibid*., p. 2. Here is the last sentence in French "…la philosophie est l'art de former, d'inventer, de fabriquer des concepts" (*Qu'est-ce que la philosopie?* Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991, p. 8). As we saw, Descartes develops the notion of the imagination to allow for the moment of creation of the concepts, and Parmenides' goddess emphasizes the importance of the third way.

[555] Since this chapter is a study of Deleuze's thought, I will approach the co-authored texts only in so far as they reveal a continuity of Deleuze's singular position.

[556] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 16.

[557] *Ibid*., p. 19.

[558] *Ibid*., p. 16.

[559] The problem emerges as our intuitive encounter with the event.

In order to understand Deleuze's definition of philosophy we need to further engage with his notion of the problem, but this time exploring its connection with intuition. As we will see, Deleuze maintains that philosophical ideas emerge in the process of intuition. More particularly, both the formulation of the problems and the creation of the concepts requires us to use the method of intuition.

What is intuition, according to Deleuze? "Intuition is neither a feeling, an inspiration, nor a disorderly sympathy, but a fully developed method, one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy. It has its strict rules, constituting that which Bergson calls 'precision' in philosophy."[560] The method of intuition has three aspects: "The first concerns stating and creating problems; the second, the discovery of genuine differences in kind; the third, the apprehension of real time."[561]

These three aspects of intuition—intuition as that through which the problems are created, differences in kind are discovered, and real time is apprehended or the oneness of differences is recognized— these three aspects constitute the conditions of the philosophical act, and so, by understanding them we will also be able to understand what philosophy is.

Let's follow Deleuze's order and look at the intuition insofar as it is that, by means of which the problems are created. First, claims Deleuze, we are confused. I would like to emphasize that here "first" implies the pedagogical point of view and should not be taken ontologically, for, to return once again to the quote with which I opened this chapter, "…even in philosophy, concepts are only created as a function of problems which are thought to be badly understood or badly posed (pedagogy of the concept)."[562] Realizing that a problem is "badly understood" and "badly posed" can be taken in at least two ways. According to the first one, we reformulate a problem of our philosophical predecessor when we see that he or she did not do justice to some issue to such an extent that finding another solution will simply not do. In other words, we seek the new intuition once we have realized that the old one has been drained of its force. But, in fact, philosophy does not usually happen in this retrospective or historiographic manner. Seeing that some problem is badly posed requires much more than finding shortcomings of the existing solutions. Instead, we need to take "badly understood" and "badly posed" to mean that some problem confuses us, i.e. exposes our stupidity, to use another Deleuzian term. In other words, we suddenly find ourselves confronted with the world as the pure unseemly chaos.

As I will argue, claiming that stupidity is the beginning of philosophy points to the fact that Deleuze consciously takes on the role of the sophist in his writings. That is, the performative aspect of his work is as important to him as its content.

But returning to the first aspect of intuition, according to Deleuze we begin with confusion or stupidity (*bêtise*). At this point in his argument we encounter one of the favorable references to Plato. In explaining his notion of stupidity Deleuze draws upon

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[560] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 13.

[561] *Ibid*., p. 14.

[562] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 16. The fact that here "first" entails procedural or pedagogical order will become significant in the next section when I will discuss the differences between Deleuze's notion of intuition and the one that I have been developing in this work.

Plato's observation about the process of learning.[563] In the *Republic*, after explaining the Allegory of the Cave, Plato discusses the way in which philosophers should be educated. How does one learn about being, or the *is*,[564] or how is one motivated to think? Plato claims that first one needs to be confused, and only then is she provoked—only then is her desire aroused—to begin using her reason. I would like to point out that by reason Deleuze means "the faculty of posing problems,"[565] in other words, not a strictly rational or intellectual faculty. So, at first—procedurally, not ontologically—we are confused. And the "we" here is the mortal who is being confused by the sophist. The mortal encounters the chaos of appearances, that is, he or she encounters the world as the multiplicity of simulacra. Or, as mortals we are utterly confused because the conventional structures of the appearances and the opinions have been destroyed, and we can no longer rely on the hierarchies according to which we used to live. Such a breakdown and the ensuing confusion need not be something extraordinary, it need not be the Event, as 1968 in France.[566] It can be as mundane as a conversation that suddenly reveals to us that we have been projecting our own image onto another human being. Such an event occurs from within the confusion in which we encounter the unseemliness of the appearances. Since we are not able to discern the cosmos, or the order in the appearances, this might lead us to formulate something as problematic.

In formulating the problem and in the almost simultaneous finding of its solution we recut the appearances, that is, separate or divide the chaos.[567] This is the second aspect of intuition—intuition as that moment of separation, in which we encounter the limits or the restraints of what appears as unbounded chaos. Deleuze understands that such restraints are not to be taken in the negative sense but rather as that which allows for form. He writes: "Every concept has an irregular *contour* defined by the sum of its components, which is why, from Plato to Bergson, we find the idea of the concept being a matter of articulation, of *cutting* and cross cutting."[568] That is, the realization of limits is absolutely necessary in the process of thinking out the confusion or coming to terms with our stupidity. Recall the passage from Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics* quoted in the first chapter, the passage in which the limit or πέρας is discussed.

The world is chaos if we consider it from the perspective of the mortal who has just been confused by the sophist, i.e. who has just realized that the criteria or the hierarchies that he or she has been treating with such reverence have all of a sudden revealed their precarious status. The order or the limit comes at the point when the philosopher begins distinguishing or recutting the appearances. As you might recall, the

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[563] Cf. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 138 ff.

[564] The term that I develop in Chapter 1.

[565] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 168.

[566] This is one of Alain Badiou's favorite examples of the Event. Cf., for example, his *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*. London: Verso, 2001.

[567] I would like to draw a parallel to Descartes's mind/body distinction and the fact that it emerges only as a result of the philosophical act.

[568] Deleuze, *What Is Philosophy?*, pp. 15-16, emphasis added.

Parmenidean goddess claims that order is possible because the *is* is *restrained* by the appearances. There is no ontological difference between the *is* and the appearances, no hierarchy; that is, the univocity of being indeed holds.[569] However, we can distinguish between the seemly and the unseemly appearances. The sophist, of course, is the one who mastered the art of successfully articulating the appearances, the art of making them into the seemly solution to the problems. Such articulations not only do not reduce the differences between the appearances, but further emphasize these differences insofar as they set certain multiplicities apart from others. So, by discovering "the genuine differences in kind" we give form to the world, and in this sense we let beings be, to use Heidegger's terminology, or, to use that of Deleuze, we put the diverging series of simulacra in communication with each other.[570] It is in this phase of intuition that the recutting of the concepts takes place. In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze writes:

> In any concept there are usually bits or components that come from other concepts, which corresponded to other problems and presupposed other planes. This is inevitable because each concept carries out a new cutting-out, takes on new contours, and must be reactivated or recut.[571]

An even stronger claim is made by Deleuze in *Bergsonism*: "…a composite must always be divided according to its *natural* articulations, that is, into elements which differ in kind. Intuition as a method is a method of division, Platonic in inspiration."[572] Such *diaresis* or division brings about the change in kind. To cite an example of such an act of division provided by Edward Casey,[573] my reflection on my melancholy brings about a transformation of the feeling, and this transformation changes the kind of feeling that I have. That is, I do not begin feeling *less* melancholy, but rather my division or recutting of this feeling gives rise to an entirely different one. Thus, when I think through I separate, and this separation changes or recreates what is, or the world. In the *Sophist* when the Visitor uses the method of division in order to find the sophist, he also creates the possibility of the oneness between the philosopher and the sophist, i.e. reconfigures what it means to be the philosopher and the sophist at the level of the appearances. Such alteration is creative if, as Deleuze points out, division is performed along "the natural articulations." But how are we to understand "natural" here? In fact, Deleuze borrows this notion from Plato. In the *Statesman* the Visitor says: "Thus, let us divide them [the τέχναι] like a sacrificial animal according to limbs, since we cannot bisect them."[574] In

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[569] Cf. Deleuze's endorsement of Duns Scotus' position on this issue in *Difference and Repetition*.

[570] Cf. Deleuze's concept of "chaosmos" from Deleuze and Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

[571] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy*, p. 18.

[572] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 22, emphasis added.

[573] This example was offered by Edward Casey in the seminar on Bergson and Deleuze at Stony Brook University (Fall semester, 2006).

[574] Plato, *Statesman*, 287c, translation mine.

Phaedrus the method of division is compared to a butcher who cuts meat. Socrates explains in dividing according to the "natural articulation" we should not be "undertaking to break in pieces behaving in the way of a clumsy butcher,"[575] but just like from one body by nature there is a left and a right side, so too we should divide. But how are we to discern what is a "natural" articulation? That is, what should be our criterion when we are trying to cut up the chaos of simulacra? The answer is quite simple, and yet complex: our criterion is truth, or, as Descartes would say, clarity and distinctness or *natural* light. But with this answer we have already moved to the third aspect of Deleuze's method of intuition.

If the first aspect is a sophistical trick, than the second one requires the art of sophistry: the sophist confuses and incites to distinguish. The third aspect is the philosophical one, but it can be effective only insofar as the philosopher is working together with the mortal. The philosopher who has incorporated the sophist and has mastered the art of confusing and distinguishing can now articulate an effective or a seemly solution that is based on truth. That is, the philosopher can now discern the differences while keeping hold of the oneness between them.

In the passage quoted above Deleuze calls the third aspect of intuition "the apprehension of real time." The following quotation from Deleuze's *Bergsonism* provides a very clear definition of this aspect: "Intuition is not duration itself. Intuition is rather the movement by which we emerge from our own duration, by which we make use of our own duration to affirm and immediately to *recognize* the existence of other durations, above or below us."[576] I would like to point out that in this passage Deleuze is quite aware that the act of *recognition* of the *other* durations does not carry a negative connotation but instead is that which allows us to "move" through the differences in kind. In other words, this type of recognition allows for the differences in kind to exist for us in the first place. Just as there are multiple senses of the term "the same," there must be at least two senses of the term "recognition:" one of them carrying all the negative connotations that Deleuze exposes and criticizes in *Difference and Repetition*, and another one corresponding to the third notion of the same, i.e. recognition as affirming the differences. So, intuition is also a kind of immediate knowledge that enables us to discern the other, and then to accept this other into ourselves while retaining it as other.

So, the act of seeing the oneness of the different is, according to Deleuze, the third aspect of intuition. During it the philosopher is able to reconnect the cuts that were made and thus gain a much more subtle—thus philosophical—understanding of what is. Such re-creation of the world is simultaneously the act of "letting the beings be" or creating a new concept which is always a multiplicity of components.

Keeping this in mind, we are now in a better position to understand the relationship between the problem and the solution. Deleuze claims that "the problem always has a solution which it deserves."[577] This means that the problem already *holds* in itself the beginning of a solution, that is, in dividing the simulacra the problem thereby

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[575] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 265e-266a, translation mine.

[576] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 32-33, emphasis added.

[577] *Ibid*., p. 16.

already imposes a certain order on them. So, the act of drawing out or thinking out the connections that occurs in the solution is already preconfigured in the act of posing the problem.[578] The concept (or concepts, insofar as a concept necessarily intersects or shares common features with other concepts) is the solution to the problem and is cut out by the problem. Thus, philosophy as an act of formulating and solving problems is a demiurgic force. It is no wonder than that the *Sophist* opens with an assertion that philosophers, even though not gods, are very much like them.[579]

Let me explain this last point a bit further. As you recall, the dialogue begins with the assertion that the philosopher is divine. Yet, because *we* are mortal the philosopher will appear, or show herself under the guise of the sophist. After this very brief exchange at the beginning between Socrates and Theodoros, the two remain silent during the rest of the dialogue, and so, this point is not taken up by them further. Moreover, since there is no dialogue explicitly devoted to searching for who the philosopher is, the conversation about the philosopher's divinity receives no further exploration in Plato's writings, at least not directly. Yet, there is one particular place in the *Sophist* where the Visitor comes close to engaging with this issue.

When articulating the final definition of the sophist the Visitor separates the productive art into the divine and the human kinds and claims that each one of these is further divided into the art of making things themselves and the art of making images.[580] Without the slightest hesitation he places the sophist's art into the category of human art of making images. Moreover, Plato implies the philosopher's belonging with the divine a bit earlier in the dialogue when he makes the Visitor admit that "the philosopher, who always attaches to the form of what is through reasoning, is, in turn, not at all easy to see because of the brightness of the region, for in most people the soul's eyes are unable to endure direct vision of the divine."[581] This passage echoes Socrates' claim that the philosopher is divine, though not a god.

Yet, the philosopher and the art proper to her are never mentioned insofar as the division between the human and divine art is concerned. Why? Because the philosopher as such cannot create. Philosophy is useless, as Heidegger eloquently claims in *What Is Metaphysics?*, except insofar as it is able to fabricate the world, but in this sense

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[578] At this point Deleuze approximates the idea that in relation to Descartes I called keeping in mind or remembering up. To use Deleuzian as well as Bergsonian terminology, such memory is most definitely *not* active memory. It is not working through, but rather leaping to the point in the virtual "side" of Bergsonian cone from which the subsequent working through can begin. Deleuze does seem to understand Plato's recollection in this way, cf. *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 85-87. "Far from being concerned with solutions, truth and falsehood primarily affect problems. A solution always has the truth it deserves according to the problem to which it is a response, and the problem always has a solution it deserves in proportion to *its own* truth or falsity—in other words, in proportion to its sense" (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 159).
This point is developed further in my chapter on Descartes.

[579] Cf. Chapter 2 of the present work. And "like" here is not to be taken to signify a representation because the philosopher's sophistical double precludes her from being an image of a god.

[580] Cf. Plato, *Sophist*, 264e-268d.

[581] *Plato's* Sophist, 254a.

philosophy already involves knowledge of the art of sophistry. Philosophy's purpose or usefulness comes with the ability to influence the appearances, or with the sophist. In other words, the philosopher qua philosopher does not have any τέχνη. We can see then that Deleuze's definition of philosophy as an *art* of formulating concepts is really a definition of the sophistry-philosophy, for it configures the sophist as the one always already there. So, paradoxically, the philosopher creates, and thus can be divine, only when she engages with the mortal.

But returning to Deleuze's method of intuition, we notice that with its third aspect a qualitative shift has occurred. It is this aspect of intuition that enables the concept to "speak the event," or think out being as that which occurs in addition to the appearances, and outside of causal chains.[582] Speaking the event is creating concepts that are true, or, as Deleuze likes to put it, fabricating concepts. That is why he writes:

> The concept is therefore both absolute and relative: it is relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane on which it is defined, and to the problems it is supposed to resolve; but it is absolute through the condensation it carries out, the site it occupies on the plane, and the conditions it assigns to the problem.[583]

And on the following page he explains that the "relativity and absoluteness of the concept are like its pedagogy and ontology, its creation and its self-positing, its ideality and its reality—the concept is real without being actual, ideal without being abstract…. Constructivism unites the relative and the absolute."[584] But this is exactly what Parmenides' goddess asserts, announcing that the appearances bind the *is* by imposing the restraints. That is, fabrication of the concepts makes them both context-dependent, and ahistorical. "As a whole it [the concept] is absolute," writes Deleuze.[585] That is, insofar as we consider the concept from the side of oneness it is absolute or true, and thus is able to speak the event, but insofar as it is fragmentary or has components that are infinite in number, and are subject to change or movement, the concept is relative. Yet again, we find in Deleuze the confirmation of the metaphysical position that I have been exploring in Parmenides, Plato, and Descartes.

To summarize Deleuze's notion of intuition, it is, on the one hand, that through which we as the mortals are confronted with the chaos of the appearances or simulacra, and are thus forced to divide or distinguish them. These two aspects rely on the art of the sophist. On the other hand, through the method of intuition the philosopher connects or puts the differences into communication with each other.

The method of intuition—the method that involves the activity of both the philosopher and the sophist—allows the philosopher to articulate the simulacra according

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[582] Deleuze, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 21.

[583] *Ibid*.

[584] *Ibid*., p. 22.

[585] *Ibid*., p. 21.

to truth. The concept which is thus "fabricated" is a multiplicity of differences, i.e. "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract."

Before I proceed any further in establishing my argument about the place of oneness in Deleuzian thought let me take a moment to briefly situate Deleuze's notion of intuition in relation to the one developed by me in Chapter 1.

Even though the two notions coincide at some points, they do emerge from two different problems, or two planes of immanence, and thus, necessarily diverge. The main difference between them can be conceptualized in the following way: Deleuze is preoccupied with emphasizing the role of the sophist, he is directing his writings to the mortal audience. In other words, for Deleuze pedagogical considerations take priority when he elaborates the method of intuition, and the philosopher enters only at the end. Thus, for Deleuze the moment of oneness is procedurally or pedagogically the result of the preceding two moments.

Whereas I, in exploring Parmenides' and then Descartes's thought focused on the intuition insofar as it relates to the philosophical act only. In other words, my notion of intuition emerges from the *Poem* of Parmenides as a condition for philosophy, and is made more precise by Descartes through his notion of understanding. However, unlike in Deleuze's situation, intuition is not understood by me as a method, but only a moment in the process of thinking—the moment of an event's immediacy.

So, if Descartes accentuates the philosopher in developing the notion of intuition, then Deleuze does the same with the sophist, and although the philosopher is present in the third moment, her role is downplayed. In the next section I will explore the reason for such a move on Deleuze's part.

Yet, what is important is that under both articulations intuition is acknowledged as necessary for thinking. In Chapter 1 I argue that it is always present in thinking insofar as the first moment is always present in the ones that develop or emerge form it. Whereas for Deleuze the method of intuition is the way in which we think. In other words, the difference between the two notions does not involve a difference in ontology but rather one of priority or emphasis: for Deleuze it is the sophistical art that is brought out in the notion of intuition, and for me—the activity proper to the philosopher.

But let's return once again to Deleuze's definition of philosophy—he tells us that it is the art of *forming*, *inventing*, and *fabricating* concepts. In the previous section I explored this definition by working through his notion of the concept. In the course of my discussion I also engaged with his idea of fabrication. In what follows I will continue exploring this idea by making explicit the parallels between Parmenides and Deleuze.

Recall that for Deleuze the second aspect of intuition is the moment of separation in which we encounter the world as chaos. To use the terminology of Parmenides, the world is chaos if we consider it from the "angle of appearances." The order or the limit, as we have seen in the *Poem*, comes at the point when we acknowledge that the *is* and this chaos are one. Order, as the Parmenidean goddess claims, is possible because the *is* is restrained by the appearances. Oneness is thus the *interaction* of the *is* and the appearances. There is no ontological difference between the *is* and the appearances, no hierarchy involved. However, we can distinguish between the seemly and the unseemly appearances, i.e. some simulacra form the multiplicities that become the solutions to the problem.

More specifically, during its third aspect intuition reconnects the appearances in a more subtle philosophical manner by way of creating concepts. In other words, philosophy creates or fabricates the world by rearranging the simulacra, or the appearances. As we have seen, fabrication for Deleuze, just like for Parmenides, is a kind of creation that happens according to the natural articulations, i.e. according to the limits inherent in what is. This, of course, is exactly the idea expressed by Parmenides' goddess, that the philosopher must know mortal opinions as well as truth. So, the fabrication of the world is not limited to the third part of the *Poem*, but become especially prominent there, since in it we encounter the scientific or mythological explanations of what is. I say "scientific or mythological" since these two are distinct only insofar as they adhere to a different standard of seemliness. However, if in the *Poem* of Parmenides we reach the conclusion that the name of the *is* is everything only after we asserted that only the *is* is, with Deleuze we begin with the union of the philosopher with the sophist, i.e. with the everything.

So, Parmenides and Deleuze, two philosophers writing in immensely different contexts, think that philosophy is fabrication of the world, insofar as it structures and restructures the appearances or the simulacra according to truth or natural articulations. For both of them "fabrication" and "appearances" do not carry the negative connotation that we often attribute to these notions. Instead, they underscore philosophy's usefulness.

The Rule of the Sophist

In the previous two sections I have been arguing that the notion of oneness explored by me in this dissertation figures prominently in Deleuze's philosophical position. In particular, I explored Deleuze's understanding of the univocity of being, as well as that of the concept.

However, Deleuze is quite explicit that his goal is to reverse the traditional metaphysics, and if in certain places, as I pointed out, it does indeed look like Deleuze is embracing oneness, at other points he explicitly denies this. How do we make sense of such contradictions? In this section I will argue that they are sophistical tricks conjured to confuse the mortal. In particular, he is trying to preclude his own thought from being misunderstood (both by his readers and by himself, insofar as he is a mortal). Deleuze's writings are also an attempt—and a successful one at that—to utterly confuse the same mortal, forcing him or her to awaken from their slumber. Given the way in which Deleuze articulates the method of intuition, it is not surprising that his writings are often especially bewildering. Finally, it is a way for Deleuze-the-philosopher to impart flexibility to his thought, to make his objective claims supple.

To see Deleuze-the-sophist at work let's take a look at one of the most powerful and far-reaching criticisms of Western metaphysics found in *Difference and Repetition*, that of the Image of Thought.

The Image of Thought is "a single Image in general which constitutes the subjective presupposition of philosophy as a whole."[586] By "subjective presupposition" Deleuze means implicit ideas that are supposed to be known to and embraced by everybody. For example, "thinking," "being," and "self" are subjective presuppositions assumed in Descartes's *cogito*. But even more fundamentally, the Image of Thought includes tacit presuppositions of the common sense, the good will, and the upright nature.[587] "It is *in terms of* this image that everybody knows and is presumed to know what it means to think."[588] However, this image is nothing other than the mortal misunderstandings of thinking.

"According to this image, thought has an affinity with the true; it formally possesses the true and materially wants the true."[589] For Deleuze, of course, inherent in this desire for truth and the assumption of knowing what it means to think is the model of recognition, i.e. that which erases differences and overlooks the new.[590] Thus Deleuze strives to bring to awareness and reevaluate all the presuppositions that comprise the Image of Thought: "It is futile to claim to reformulate the doctrine of truth without first taking stock of the postulates which project this distorting image of thought."[591] More specifically, for Deleuze this entails the following:

> As a result, the conditions of philosophy which would be without any kind of presuppositions appear all the more clearly: instead of being supported by the moral Image of thought, it would take as its point of departure a *radical critique* of this Image and the 'postulates' it implies.[592]

Thus, critique is Deleuze's starting point. It is clear from this passage that Deleuze thinks that philosophy should begin without any presuppositions: "The thought which is born in thought, the act of thinking which is neither given by innateness nor presupposed by reminiscence but engendered in its genitality, is a *thought without image*."[593] In order to let philosophy begin one must completely destroy the Image of thought that dominated and still dominates Western thinking. Only by suspending the subjective or unacknowledged presuppositions of the common sense, the good will and the upright nature, according to Deleuze, do we allow something new to emerge.

Moreover, Deleuze claims that

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[586] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 132.

[587] Cf. esp. *ibid.,* pp. 131-138.

[588] *Ibid*., p. 131.

[589] *Ibid*.

[590] Cf. *ibid*., p. 133.

[591] *Ibid*., p. 132.

[592] *Ibid*., emphasis added.

[593] *Ibid*., p. 167, emphasis added.

> Not an individual endowed with good will and a natural capacity for thought, but an individual full of *ill will* who *does not manage to think*, either naturally or conceptually. *Only such an individual is without presuppositions*. Only such an individual effectively begins and effectively repeats. For this individual the subjective presuppositions are no less prejudiced than the objective presuppositions….[594]

That is, Deleuze criticizes Western thought and proposes as a solution a situation radically opposed to it. In other words, he suggests a reversal of (what he sees as) the current state of affairs. Instead of the subjective presupposition of "a *good will on the part of the thinker* and an *upright nature on the part of thought*"[595] he presupposes "an individual full of ill will" and thought that is immoral. Aren't these presuppositions equally subjective? If we accept, as I have been arguing, that Deleuze intends to destroy the ossified mortal opinions, then Deleuze's move becomes quite clear—the reversal is sophistical. Here he clearly takes on the role of the critic, i.e. of the one whose intention is to point out the shortcomings and deficiencies, to destroy.[596] But as he notes himself in later *What Is Philosophy?*:

> …when philosophers criticize each other it is on the basis of problems and on a plane that is different from theirs and that down the old concepts in a way a cannon can be melted down to make new weapons. It never takes place on the same plane. To criticize is only to establish that a concept vanishes when it is thrust into a new milieu, losing some of its components, or acquiring others that transform it. But those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished concept without being able to give it forces it needs to return to life, are the plague of philosophy.[597]

In other words, to criticize in the way Deleuze does it in the passages quoted above, but also at other numerous points of *Difference and Repetition*, is to be unable to understand the other, or to take such misunderstanding to the extreme—to the nth power, as Deleuze puts it. Deleuze-the-philosopher is quite aware of this, therefore the radical critique of *Difference and Repetition* is a sophistical trick. Even if as he writes this book he is not fully conscious of it, he destroys in order to create.

Let us now consider a concept created by Deleuze that will help further clarify Deleuze's understanding of the image of thought as well as explicate the relationship of Deleuze's philosophy to the history of Western thinking. This concept is called the "plane of immanence."

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[594] *Ibid*., p. 130, emphasis added.

[595] *Ibid*., p. 131.

[596] I elaborate the position of the critic at the end of Chapter 2.

[597] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 29.

> Philosophy is a constructivism, and constructivism has two qualitatively different complementary aspects: the creation of concepts and the laying out of a plane. Concepts are the multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them.[598]

So, philosophy is both the creation of concepts (the seemly articulations of the appearances) and the creation of the plane of immanence. According to Deleuze, the plane of immanence is a horizon for the concepts:

> Concepts are events, but the plane is the horizon of events…not the relative horizon that functions as a limit, which changes with an observer and encloses observable states of affairs, but the *absolute* horizon, *independent* of any observer, which makes the *event* as concept *independent* of a visible state of affairs in which it is brought about. [599]

As we have seen earlier, the concept is connected to the event insofar as it is formulated or created as the solution to the problem, and that is why the concept is absolute as well as relative. Here we learn that there is an absolute horizon for the events, and it is this horizon that makes the concepts visible.

But in the following quote something strange happens:

> The plane of immanence is not a concept that is or can be thought but rather *the image of thought*, the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought. It is not a method, since every method is concerned with concepts and presupposes such an image.[600]

How are we to understand Deleuze's use of the term "the image of thought" in view of his sweeping criticism of this notion in *Difference and Repetition*? Of course, we can write off the issue by pointing to a shift that took place in Deleuze's thinking over time, i.e. by making a chronological distinction such as "the early" versus "the later" Deleuze. I think that a more generous, and philosophically more creative reading of this apparent contradiction in Deleuze has to acknowledge the sophistic character of his writings. Thus, Deleuze's insistence in *Difference and Repetition* on destroying the Image of Thought altogether and beginning without any presuppositions, or from "ill will," is a move directed towards the mortal. Just like his project of the radical reversal of metaphysics, and just as his emphasis on difference, this is a move intended to bring Western philosophy to greater awareness of its own prejudices. This is Deleuze's beginning—the sophistical beginning. Because essentially or ultimately Deleuze-the-philosopher is oriented towards the mortal: "The nonphilosophical is perhaps closer to

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[598] *Ibid*., pp. 35-36.

[599] *Ibid*., p. 36, emphasis added.

[600] *Ibid*., p. 37, emphasis added.

the heart of philosophy than philosophy itself, and this means that philosophy *cannot be content to be understood only philosophically or conceptually*, but is addressed *essentially* to nonphilosophers as well."[601]

Another significant way in which Deleuze sets himself in opposition to the traditional metaphysics is through his criticism of Plato. Of course, Plato is not the only one criticized by Deleuze—very few thinkers from the history of Western thought seem to escape Deleuze's wrath. However, Deleuze's confrontation with Plato is worthy of mention in view of my project.

According to Deleuze, the aim of Platonism, the motivation of Platonism is to distinguish between a copy and a simulacrum, and then to repress a simulacrum.[602]

Deleuze's response to Platonism, as we might expect by now, is the following: "Everything has become simulacrum, for by simulacrum we should not understand a simple imitation but rather the act by which the *very idea of a model or privileged position is challenged and overturned*."[603] Or consider an even more explicit statement of his criticism:

> The whole of Platonism…is dominated by the idea of drawing a distinction between 'the thing itself' and the simulacra. Difference is not thought in itself but related to a ground, subordinated to the same and subject to mediation in mythic form. Overturning Platonism, then, means denying the primacy of the original over copy, of model over image; glorifying the reign of simulacra and reflections.[604]

However, what we need to notice is that Deleuze is, after all, making a crucial distinction between Plato and Platonism. In fact, he is not a mere critic of Plato's thought, but indeed does engage with it and try to understand it. Yet he does criticize a certain tradition of (mis)understanding Plato, or the mortal reifications of Plato's thought that, indeed, need to be destroyed. Consider the following passage from *Difference and Repetition*:

> The sophist is not the being (or the non-being) of contradiction, but the one who *raises everything to the level of simulacra* [doubt and relativism] and maintains them in that state. Was it not inevitable that Plato should push irony to that point—to parody? Was it not inevitable that *Plato should be the first to overturn Platonism*, or at least to show the direction such an overturning should take? We are reminded of the grand finale of the *Sophist*: difference is displaced, division turns back against itself and begins to function in reverse, and, as a result of being applied to simulacra themselves (dreams, shadows, reflections, paintings), shows the impossibility of distinguishing them from the originals or from models. The

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[601] *Ibid*., emphasis added.

[602] Cf. Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 253 and pp. 258-259.

[603] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 69, emphasis added.

[604] *Ibid*., p. 66.

> Eleatic Stranger gives a definition of the sophist such that he can no longer be distinguished from Socrates himself: the ironic imitator who proceeds by brief arguments (questions and problems).[605]

This passage shows such penetrating understanding of Plato, especially Plato-the-sophist. So, just as in the case of the Plato's Visitor from the *Sophist*, Deleuze's violence is directed not against the philosopher but the congealed ideas of those thoughtlessly repeating Plato's thoughts, including, of course, Plato.

> For there is a vast difference between destroying in order to conserve and perpetuate the established order of representations, models, and copies, and destroying the models and copies *in order to institute the chaos which creates*, making the simulacra function and raising a phantasm—the most innocent of all destructions, the destruction of Platonism.[606]

As you can see, Deleuze is here perfectly aware of the fact that the sophist is necessary for philosophy, and embraces him most enthusiastically. Yet, this does not prevent Deleuze from being a philosopher who is doing originary metaphysics—quite the contrary.

So, according to Deleuze, philosophy is an art of fabricating concepts. This entails that the philosopher has to confront the chaos of the simulacra and then, through the method of intuition, put its multiplicities into communication with each other, thus transforming the world. "The object of philosophy is to create concepts that are always new," writes Deleuze.[607] Such creation of "always new" concepts presupposes that philosophy as metaphysics is very much alive.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Deleuze at times explicitly admits but for the most part implicitly points to the fact that there is a sense of oneness which is non-reductive of difference. Since, as I have argued, it is exactly the same sense of oneness that Parmenides develops in his *Poem*, then we justified in seeing Deleuze's thought as a difference within the one voice of being—a different way of thinking being.

Such oneness of the world and also of philosophy does indeed allow the differences to be; for example, the differences between the way in which Plato and

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[605] *Ibid*., p. 68, emphasis added.

[606] Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 266, emphasis added.

[607] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 5.

Deleuze articulate the act of philosophizing. The differences are inevitable simply because the spatial and temporal positions from which these philosophers speak are never the same. To use Deleuze's framework, the problems to which these thinkers are responding are shaped by their particular historical and geographical situations, or the differences of their mortal aspect. At another level there is the internal difference within each particular thinker, i.e. the difference between the way in which his or her aspects—the philosopher, the sophist, and the mortal—are configured. Among these the sophist is that difference that constantly challenges the articulations of the world as well as the configuration of the human being. Even more importantly, there is the difference within the oneness of thinking and being.

So, to use Deleuze's term, there is indeed the Difference in Itself. This Difference changes itself with each differenciation that it brings about in the appearances, just like Deleuze claims. Thus, every time and in every place, the Difference is itself different. Yet, to be able to notice such radical differenciation a "deeper" common ground is absolutely necessary. We may call this ground the abyss, as Deleuze occasionally does, since it is not entirely subject to rational clarity. This (un)ground is the oneness between the opinions and truth, between the appearances or the simulacra and the *is*. The sophist in all his destructiveness only reinforces the oneness of the world.

By endorsing such oneness Deleuze confirms the argument of this dissertation, namely, that even today, in our postmodern or postpostmodern situation, it makes sense to speak of philosophy as metaphysics, i.e. to speak of the articulations of truth and axioms of thinking.[608]

Deleuze recognizes that only through assuming the initial position of oneness with another philosopher we can understand his or her work. Whereas when we adopt the position of the critic we start a monologue that only looks like a conversation, i.e. we are unable to engage with a philosophical thought. In the Introduction I quoted the following passage from Deleuze's *What Is Philosophy?*: "If one can still be a Platonist, Cartesian, or Kantian today, it is because one is justified in thinking that their concepts can be reactivated in our problems and inspire those concepts that need to be recreated."[609] The task of the philosopher is to reactivate thought that looks like a relic or remnant of an old age, i.e. to think anew. This is the sense of the metaphysics that is originary—to think with an other philosopher, and thus to create. Whereas those who criticize without creating, or approach a philosopher's work as an instance of thinking that has happened in the past are, as Deleuze says, "the plague of philosophy."[610] For they make the thoughts of the other (philosopher) ossify or vanish from the present moment. So we cannot understand if we begin from the position of distance or

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[608] But even if in my attempt to engage with Deleuze's thought I did an immense injustice and violence to it; even if I suppressed his insights of radical difference under the old model of the Same, and situated them within a hierarchy that he was trying so hard to destroy; even if I entirely reversed his thought—even if all of the above is the case and I did something monstrous to his thought, isn't this precisely the (sophistical) point of his position? Since Difference becomes different with each differenciation. And, perhaps, the difference of the 21st century is to see the oneness?

[609] Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, p. 28.

[610] *Ibid*.

opposition, if we are unwilling or unable to admit that we can move to the other's plane of immanence through the third aspect of intuition. In this dissertation I tried to reactivate the thought of Parmenides, Plato, Descartes, and Deleuze while articulating a solution to my own problem, the problem of the supposed end of philosophy as metaphysics which was first most explicitly raised by Heidegger.

One way to situate Deleuze is to see his work as both continuation of and challenge to Heidegger's question. Deleuze continues the Heideggerian project by questioning the status of metaphysics, and goes beyond such questioning by emphasizing the significance of the sophist and the chaos that the sophist brings with him, hence Deleuze's prioritization of the difference. This affinity with and difference from Heidegger becomes evident in a two page insertion into *Difference and Repetition* entitled the "Note on Heidegger's Philosophy of Difference."[611] From this brief summary of Heidegger's position on difference we can conclude that Deleuze fundamentally agrees with him. However, the "note" ends with the following assertion: "Does he [Heidegger] conceive of *being* in such a manner that it will be truly disengaged from any subordination in relation to the identity of representation? It would seem not, given his critique of the Nietzschean eternal return." That is, Heidegger too ultimately betrays Difference in subordinating it to the Same. It is not the purpose of this chapter to determine whether or not Deleuze is correct in this assessment of Heidegger; what is significant here is that Deleuze sees himself as an inheritor of the Heideggerian project and Deleuze's metaphysical creativity is to a large extent incited by his joining Heidegger's thought or intuition. Such a project can be successful only if it first disrupts the non-originary metaphysical structures. That is, Deleuze ends up continuing the metaphysical tradition of originary metaphysics by challenging the ossified constructions of its historiographic versions.

In this dissertation too Heidegger played an important, although for the most part invisible role. Yet, it is he who incites the problem to which this dissertation is responding, namely the problem of the emergence of the new thought or the new metaphysics that does not deny or repress its past. I argued that the way to allow for such emergence is to realize that there is a sense in which metaphysics does not have a past but is an act of thinking being now. Moreover, since metaphysics does not have a history, it cannot end. I called such metaphysics originary and considered its three moments: its most basic axiom of oneness, that of its place—the philosopher—and that of its time or history. By considering the oneness of truth and the opinions, or being and the appearances put forward in the *Poem* of Parmenides, I argued that philosophy begins by intuiting the oneness that maintains or supports difference. Then, by exploring Plato's *Sophist*, I established that the place of philosophy is the philosopher who eventually admits her other, the sophist, in order to be able to communicate with the mortal. In the chapter on the philosophical persona of Descartes I exposed the sense in which the historical situation is irrelevant to philosophy, although in order to transform the world the philosopher does need to engage the way of looking at the world called "the body," or to particularize her thought. The final chapter on Deleuze reinforced these three points, as well as showing that originary metaphysics is being done in our own era.

[611] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 64-66.

So, together with Parmenides, Plato, Descartes, and Deleuze, we realize that philosophy is both the (useless) act of thinking being and the (most fruitful) fabrication of what is, insofar as philosophy is the constant (re)articulation of the simplicity of the *is*, a rearticulation in the process of which emerges and reemerges the world.

Sometimes such articulation involves claiming to overthrow ontology,[612] and Deleuze is one of the most vivid examples of this strategy. However, as we have seen, behind this claim is the intention to seduce the (postmodern) mortal in order to force him or her to think, i.e. to be the philosopher now.

[612] Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 25.

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