CHAPTER 3

Derrida and Sexual Difference

Ginette Michaud

> What will the index be? On which words will it rely? Only on names? And on which syntax, visible or invisible? Briefly, by which signs will you recognize his speaking or remaining silent about what you nonchalantly call sexual difference? What is it you are thinking beneath those words or through them?
>
> –Jacques Derrida, "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference"[1]

Since the beginning(s) – and by "beginning(s)," I do not mean only in Jacques Derrida's philosophical body of work but also in his life, what in "Otobiographies" he would later call, with no small irony, "'my-life,' the 'I-live'"[2] – the problem of sexual difference was to play a part for "Jackie," someone whose first name had a feminine flexional ending, as well as a childish diminutive derived from "Jackie Coogan," a.k.a. "The Kid," the American child hero of the silver screen made famous by Charlie Chaplin's film. As is well known, Derrida changed his first name upon entering the public sphere, because he found that "Jackie was not possible as the first name of an author."[3] "Jackie" lacked the authority, the legitimacy and ultimately the virility required to affix one's signature to a philosophical oeuvre. Derrida thus opted for "Jacques," "a semi-pseudonym" that he calls "very French, Christian, simple," even as he admits that this gesture "erased more things than [he] could say in a few words."[4] Without going as far Peter Benson, who argues that Derrida "has

[1] Jacques Derrida, "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference," trans. Ruben Berezdivin, in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, ed. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 381.

[2] Derrida, "Otobiographies: The Teaching of Nietzsche and the Politics of the Proper Name," trans. Avital Ronell, in *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation. Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida*, ed. Christie V. McDonald (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 14, 9.

[3] Derrida, "'A 'Madness' Must Watch over Thinking,'" trans. Peggy Kamuf, in *Points . . . Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 344.

[4] Ibid., 344.

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therefore conducted his whole professional life in a form of drag, donning a new name for his public persona,"[5] the fact remains that this decision is by no means negligible in the construction – or deconstruction – of an "identity." Moreover, "Jackie" rhymed with the secret Jewish first name of "Élie" that had been bestowed by his mother, Esther; it was never recorded in the civil registry and belatedly discovered by Derrida. Derrida discloses this "revelation" in "Circumfession," an essay that, much like *Glas* (1974) and *The Postal Card* (1980), is unquestionably one of his most adventurous texts, because it lays bare the question of sexuality in the life of a philosopher (all of these words imply invisible quotation marks, of course). Discovering the gift of the (first) name, something of the relation to sexual difference then compelled Derrida in all of its paradoxically essential ambivalence, equivocation and instability.

In the film *Derrida* by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman, Derrida declares all at once his interest in the topic of the sex lives of philosophers: "Their sex lives . . . I would like to hear them speak about their sexual lives . . . Because it's something they don't talk about. I'd love to hear something they refuse to talk about. Why do philosophers present themselves asexually in their work? Why have they erased their private lives from their work?"[6] This is not a joke as one might think but a most serious question: indeed, Derrida makes the apparent asexuality of philosophical discourse in Kant, Hegel, Levinas and Heidegger a true focus for his work, and not simply a secondary theme. More than any philosopher before him, Derrida has insisted on a re-sexualization of philosophical or theoretical discourse, especially each time he would discern a "strategy of neutralization"[7] aimed at erasing sexual difference.

The stakes invested in the "feminine," a notion that cannot be reducible to the opposition between man and woman, has remained at the core of Derrida's embodied thinking, as he underlines it in "*Geschlecht* II":

[5] Peter Benson, "Cross-Dressing with Jacques and Judy," *Philosophy Now*, last modified 2000, accessed November 14, 2016, https://philosophynow.org/issues/28/Cross-Dressing_with_Jacques_and_Judy. Benson parallels Derrida's gesture and that of Judith Butler, who did not like to be called "Judy," a first name that she considered "patronizing and excessively feminine," in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), ix. Benson concludes: "Butler and Derrida, therefore, have both manipulated their names towards a less feminine form with the aim of preserving and enhancing their authority, rather than with the aim of subverting and mocking gender conventions."

[6] Derrida, *Derrida: Screenplay and Essays on the Film* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), 105. See *Derrida*, directed by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman (Jane Doe Films/Zeitgeist Films, 2002).

[7] Derrida, "Choreographies," trans. Christie V. McDonald, in *Points*, 105.

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"Thinking is not cerebral or disincarnate."[8] This insistence over determines the importance that he always grants to the question of sexual difference in his philosophical work not only in its conceptual regime but also in its textual strategies; this appears most eloquently in his polylogues,[9] those polyvocal, polylocal and polysexual discourses that he puts forward in a number of essays ("Restitutions of the Truth in Pointing," *Memoirs of the Blind, Feu la cendre*, "Right of Inspection," "A Silkworm of One's Own," to name but a few). These texts stage a performative scenography enacting a desire not to remain at the level of the division of "sex(d)uality" but on the contrary to multiply and divide the innumerable, infinitely differentiating voices woven in each sex and text. Derrida alluded to this weaving of voices in Safaa Fathy's film *D'ailleurs, Derrida* (one can note that this film stressed much more the question of sexual difference than the American *Derrida*[10]), by stating to which point a constant vigilance should be exerted against the sexual repression and violence exerted on women wherever their voices are at risk of being muted, censored or prohibited. The essay in *Veils*, in which Derrida announced that by pulling on the string of this single word, the whole fabric of culture would follow ("to touch 'that' which one calls 'veil' is to touch everything. You'll leave nothing intact, safe and sound, neither in your culture, nor in your memory, nor in your language, as soon as you

[8] Derrida, "*Geschlecht* II: Heidegger's Hand," trans. John P. Leavey Jr., in *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida*, ed. John Sallis (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 171. This text was reissued to accompany the DVD *Unpacking Derrida's Library*, ed. Eduardo Cadava and Aaron Levy (Princeton, NJ: Slought and Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, 2014).

[9] Described in a famous mathematical equation as "'polylogue' (for $n + 1$ – female – voices)." See Derrida, "Restitutions of the Truth in Pointing," in *A Derrida Reader*, 279.

[10] Derrida, who had been asked by Dirk Kirby, "If you had a choice, what philosopher would you like to have been your mother?," answered in a genealogical manner that was rather ambivalent, which attracted the attention of feminist philosopher Penelope Deutscher: "My mother? Good question, it's a good question in fact. I'll try to tell you why its [*sic*] impossible for me to have any philosopher as a mother. My mother, my mother couldn't be a philosopher. A philosopher couldn't be my mother. That's a very important point. Because the figure of the philosopher is, for me, always a masculine figure. This is one of the reasons I undertook the deconstruction of philosophy. All the deconstruction of phallogocentrism is the deconstruction of what one calls philosophy which since its inception, has always been linked to a paternal figure. So, a philosopher is a Father, not a Mother. So the philosopher that would be my mother would be a post-deconstructive philosopher, that is, myself or my son. My mother as a philosopher would be my granddaughter, for example. An inheritor. A woman philosopher who would reaffirm the deconstruction." Deutscher comments on this passage in "Derrida's Impossible Genealogies," *Theory and Event* 8, no. 1 (2005), accessed November 14, 2016, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/180067, but interrupts the quote at that point. Of course, Derrida's reply needs to be cited in *extenso* to make sense, as he adds: "And consequently, would be a woman who thinks. Not a philosopher. I always distinguish thinking from philosophy. A thinking mother – it's what I both love and try to give birth to." Derrida, *Derrida*, 97.

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take on the word 'veil.' As soon as you let yourself caught up in it, in the word, first of all the French word, to say nothing yet about the thing, nothing will remain, nothing will remain anymore"[11]), anticipated in a remarkable manner what we have seen happen in politics about the issue of the veil, an issue that has become increasingly loaded and tense in the past twenty years.

While it is difficult and insufficient, as always in Derrida's work, to attempt a thematization of the question of sexual difference in his thinking, important nodal points have nevertheless marked the often controversial reception of his meditations by diverse feminist currents on both sides of the Atlantic since the seventies. I would list here a series of issues: the problem of generalized fetishism (Kofman[12]), gender performativity (Butler[13]), the rereading of the figure of Antigone (Chanter[14]), the question of hospitality as rethought from the point of view of the feminine (Still[15]), the political debates between Anglo-American feminists and deconstruction (Elam[16]), the ethical dimension of feminism and the deconstruction of the law (Cornell[17]), debates with queer theory and transgender studies over the concepts of embodiment, drag as paradigm for performativity and

[11] Derrida, "A Silkworm of One's Own," in *Veils*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 24.

[12] Sarah Kofman, "Ça cloche," trans. Caren Kaplan, in *Derrida and Deconstruction*, ed. Hugh J. Silverman (New York and London: Routledge, 1989), 105–34.

[13] See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999).

[14] See Tina Chanter, "Heidegger and Gender: An Uncanny Retrieval of Hegel's Antigone," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Heidegger*, ed. François Raffoul and Eric S. Nelson (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 441–50; *The Returns of Antigone: Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. Tina Chanter and Sean D. Kirkland (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014); "Antigone as the White Fetish of Hegel and the Seductress of Derrida," in *A Companion to Derrida*, ed. Zeynep Direk and Leonard Lawlor (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 378–90; "Does Antigone Stand or Fall in Relation to Hegel's Master–Slave Dialectic? A Response to Derrida's *Glas*," *Paragraph* 39, no. 2 (2016): 202–19. Chanter organized a "Derrida and Gender" conference (London Graduate School Summer Academy in the Critical Humanities, June 27–30, 2016), in which she and Catherine Malabou, Emily Apter, Elissa Marder, Geoffrey Bennington, Peggy Kamuf, among others, were participants.

[15] Judith Still, *Derrida and Hospitality: Theory and Practice* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

[16] See Diane Elam, *Feminism and Deconstruction: Ms. En Abyme* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). See also Kimberley Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" 1 (1989), accessed November 14, 2016, http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8; Norma Alarcón, "The Theoretical Subject(s) of 'This Bridge Called My Back' and Anglo-American Feminism," in *Criticism in the Borderlands: Studies in Chicano Literature, Culture and Ideology*, ed. Hector Caldéron and José David Saldiva (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 28–41.

[17] Drucilla Cornell, *Beyond Accommodation: Ethical Feminism, Deconstruction, and the Law* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991).

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subversion of gender, the political implications of speech-act theory and performativity (Deutscher).[18] Without having to analyze in detail this complex reception that has gone over several generations now (if Derrida's positions have been criticized violently by some feminist theoreticians, they met with frank success with gay and queer studies[19]), it is necessary to recall what Derrida meant to elaborate in his first texts through concepts like the "hymen" ("The Double Session") and "double invagination" ("Living on: Borderlines"). Very early, we find a new way of thinking sexual difference that, while apparently borrowing these figures from the feminine body, in fact radically questions any appeal to anatomy and to essentialism. What is rejected is that

> The truth value (that is, Woman as the major allegory of truth in Western discourse) and its correlative, Femininity (the essence or truth of Woman), are there to assuage such hermeneutic anxiety. These are the places that one should acknowledge . . . they are the foundations or anchorings of Western rationality (of what I have called "phallogocentrism" [as the complicity of Western metaphysics with a notion of male firstness]). Such recognition should not make of either the truth value or femininity an object of knowledge (at stake are the norms of knowledge and knowledge as norm); still less should it make of them a place to inhabit, a home.[20]

Much like literature, the "feminine," rather than Femininity, is thus associated in Derrida's writings with figures of displacement, of the "other" or the stranger, with "fleeting beings" passing through all borders, beings without an *oikos* or a place to settle, as suggested by this passage from *Fichus* in which Derrida states: "And language will be my subject,"[21] echoing the opening remark of *Spurs*: "However – it is woman who will be my subject."[22]

[18] Penelope Deutscher, *Yielding Gender: Feminism, Deconstruction and the History of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). See also Michael O'Rourke, "The Afterlives of Queer Theory," *International Social Science Journal* 63, no. 207–08 (2012): 25–37; Paisley Currah, "Feminism, Gender Pluralism, and Gender Neutrality: Maybe It's Time to Bring Back the Binary," April 26, 2016, accessed November 14, 2016, https://paisleycurrah.com/2016/04/26/feminism-gender-pluralism-and-gender-neutrality-maybe-its-time-to-bring-back-the-binary/.

[19] On this aspect of the reception of Derrida, and without sharing the conclusion about "the disappointment caused by deconstructivist theory that was felt by the most lucid women," see M.-C. Cadeau, "La pensée de Jacques Derrida aux fondements du gender et du queer," *L'EPHEP*. Last modified 2016, accessed November 14, 2016, https://ephep.com/fr/content/sex-gender/m-ccadeau-la-pensee-de-jaques-derrida-aux-fondements-du-gender-et-du-queer.

[20] Derrida, "Choreographies," 96.

[21] Derrida, "*Fichus*. Frankfurt Address," in *Paper Machine*, trans. and ed. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 164.

[22] Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, trans. Barbara Harlow (Venezia and Paris: Corbo e Fiore Editori and Flammarion, 1976), 31a. The proposition is inverted at the end of the text: "There is no such thing as a gift of Being from which there might be apprehended and opposed to it something like

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He adds: "The specimen exhibits for this defenseless being, this power-deprivation, this vulnerable *Ohnmächtigkeit*, can be the dream, or language, or the unconscious, just as well as the animal, the child, the Jew, the foreigner, or the woman."[23]

What is even more significant is that Derrida attacks the "concept of the concept" (as matrix and conception) by critiquing this determination of sexual difference following binary oppositions (feminine/masculine, bisexuality, homosexuality/heterosexuality and so on) that always return to the same idea, the law of the proper and of propriety; it is this "prescriptive order" that he wants to dismantle: "It is that order that a problematics of woman and a problematics of difference, as sexual difference, should disrupt along the way."[24] By questioning the anatomical, biological and anthropological determinations that are supposed to found sexual difference, Derrida's deconstruction attacks the phallocentric system in its very root, which triggers a cascade of effects at all levels, including the philosophical (affecting all metaphysical presuppositions, including the ontic-ontological one), ethical, sociopolitical, pragmatic and practical ones.

Since the famous 1972 conference on "Nietzsche today?" during which Derrida astonished his audience when he declared in a panel: "I would like to write like a woman as well, and I keep trying,"[25] since *Spurs* and *Glas*, up to the series of essays entitled "*Geschlecht*"[26] that are devoted to Heidegger and to this untranslatable term ("it can be translated by sex, race, species, genus, gender, stock, family, generation or genealogy, community"[27]), Derrida wonders whether the question of sexual difference is only

a determined gift (whether of the subject, the body, of the sex or other like things – so woman, then will not have been my subject)." Derrida, *Spurs*, 95a.

[23] Derrida, "*Fichus*," 171–72. [24] Derrida, "Choreographies," 100.

[25] Derrida, "La question du style," in *Nietzsche aujourd'hui ? 1) Intensités* (Paris: UGE, 1973), 299. In his biography, Benoît Peeters alludes to this intervention as opening "the most far-reaching perspectives," and sees it as a sign of the "alliance [that] was soon to be formed" between Derrida and women. See Peeters, *Derrida: A Biography*, trans. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 243–44.

[26] The series has itself a complex, non-chronological genealogy: "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference" (1991), "*Geschlecht* II: Heidegger's Hand," (1987) and "Heidegger's Ear: Philopolemology (*Geschlecht* IV)," trans. John P. Leavey Jr., in *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*, ed. John Sallis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 163–218. The third panel of the triptych, which we know only by "a truncated typescript" of about thirty pages, is only a first draft of a seminar given in Paris, of which Derrida offered "a cursory sketch" at the end of "*Geschlecht* II," which would total some 100 pages. It is still unpublished in French. For a systematic reading of the series, see David Farrell Krell, *Phantoms of the Other: Four Generations of Derrida's Geschlecht* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015).

[27] Derrida, "*Geschlecht* II," 162.

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a "regional question in a larger order which would subordinate it first to the domain of a general ontology, subsequently to that of a fundamental ontology and finally to the question of the truth of being itself." He adds, and this is my main focus: "Indeed, it may no longer even be a *question*."[28] This strategic move – and the question of strategy is indeed crucial here[29] – is equally at the core of his reading of Heidegger, in which the issue concerning "Dasein as such [which] belongs to neither of the two sexes" is to see that it "does not mean that its being is deprived of sex. On the contrary, here one must think of a predifferential, or rather a predual, sexuality – which does not necessarily mean unitary, homogeneous, or undifferentiated."[30] Here, Derrida pushes Heidegger's argument to its final consequence, opening in the apparent neutrality or asexualization of *Geschlecht* the path of another thinking of sexual difference "that would not yet be sexual duality, difference as dual":

> The withdrawal [*retrait*] of the dyad leads toward the other sexual difference. It may also prepare other questions. For instance, this one: How did difference get deposited in the two? Or again, if one insisted on consigning difference within dual opposition, how does multiplication get arrested in difference? And in sexual difference?[31]

At stake here is the possibility of thinking sexual difference without resorting to negativity, by reverting to the dispersion and multiplication of *Geschlecht* (hence without glossing over its polysemy, as Heidegger still tries to do by reducing it to a primordial simplicity or unity); sexual difference would as yet "not be sealed by a two," not "typed by *opposition* or by duality." Can it be "Not yet sealed or no longer sealed?"[32] Derrida asks. Peggy Kamuf stresses this point in her commentary of "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference":

> Such a deliberate sexualization of the general language of philosophical or analytic discourse is a strategic move as well against or at least in tension with the kind of neutralization of sexual difference that has traditionally

[28] Derrida, *Spurs*, 85a. Derrida underlines.

[29] One recalls Derrida's comments on women's studies and the fundamental institutional structure of the university, which is the Law of the university: "It is a question of two affirmations, one which appears in classically coded language – optimistic, liberating, revolutionary – and the other which appears on the contrary more modest, more conscious of the fact that at least one radically changed things . . . This is the first question – it is a question about strategy. Of course, it has been a necessary phase, strategically speaking, to build women's studies. But what should be the next step? Only this first move, this first effort? Or something totally new? And is it only a question of strategy – is not strategy itself the real risk?" Derrida, "Women in the Beehive: A Seminar with Jacques Derrida," in *Men in Feminism*, ed. Alice Jardine and Paul Smith (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), 192.

[30] Derrida, "*Geschlecht*," 387–88. [31] Ibid., 401. [32] Ibid.

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> characterized it … To admit such a generalization, a sexualization of *différance*, is also to admit as an ongoing possibility that sexual difference will not always be marked or inscribed by its most common or general name in a given language. This is yet another reason it would be strictly impossible to recognize the limits of a theme of gender or sexual difference running through Derrida's text. The possibility of thematizing this difference, and all the difference it makes, is throughout put in question there, explicitly in innumerable places and implicitly at every stroke with which the text imprints itself.[33]

Twenty years after *Geschlecht* I was first published in French in 1983, Jean-Luc Nancy unhesitatingly reaffirmed this sexualization of *différance* in *The "There Is" of Sexual Relation* in which he asserted that "Derrida's *différance* must therefore be sexual. That is to say, ontological difference is sexual, and vice versa, which no doubt affects being in its beingness [*étance ou estance*]."[34] Then if one hears already in "*différance*" the syntagm of "sexual difference," one should also keep in mind this definition of "deconstruction," a definition that, unlike the four or five other definitions given by Derrida, has rarely been commented:

> The experience of "deconstruction," of "deconstructive" questioning, reading, or writing, in no way threatens or casts suspicion on "enjoyment." I believe rather the opposite. Every time there is "*jouissance*" (but the "there is" of this event is itself extremely enigmatic), there is "deconstruction." Effective deconstruction. Deconstruction perhaps has the effect, if not the mission, of liberating forbidden *jouissance*. That's what has to be on board. It is perhaps this *jouissance* which most irritates the all-out adversaries of "deconstruction." … Let's say there is not efficient deconstruction without the greatest possible pleasure.[35]

This "greatest possible pleasure" thus lies at the core of Derrida's reading of sexual difference. Beyond the "decorum of all codes" and gender norms, he dreams of a "multiplicity of sexually marked voices," of an "indeterminable number of blended voices, this mobile of non-identified sexual marks whose choreography can carry, divide, multiply the body of each 'individual,' whether he be classified as 'man' or as 'woman' according to the criteria of usage."[36] It is this "joyous disturbance," a "risky turbulence"

[33] Peggy Kamuf, "Derrida and Gender: The Other Sexual Difference," in *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, ed. Tom Cohen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 88–89.

[34] Jean-Luc Nancy, *The "There Is" of Sexual Relation*, in *Corpus II: Writings on Sexuality*, trans. Anne O'Byrne (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 109, note 6.

[35] Jacques Derrida, "'This Strange Institution Called Literature': An Interview with Jacques Derrida," in *Jacques Derrida: Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge (New York: Routledge, 1992), 55–56.

[36] Derrida, "Choreographies," 108.

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escaping all "*assignation à résidence*" and identity surveillance that he wishes to save through what he calls the "chance" of a dance whereby places are exchanged until they "can no longer be recognized."[37] By not answering to a topological or economical question, by differing these questions and most of all the question itself (what is a woman? what does woman want?), by resisting the order that turns truth values or femininity into objects of knowledge, Derrida seeks the "invention of an other inscription, one very old and very new, a displacement of bodies and places that is quite different."[38] "*Différence sexuelle*," an idiomatic French syntagm that resists translation (as noted by Anne Emmanuelle Berger[39]), thus leads to "the irruptive emergence of a new 'concept,' a concept that can no longer be, and never could be, included in the previous regime."[40]

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That said, topics such as "Derrida and the Feminine" remain sensitive issues in the Derridean canon. They are to be considered, as is always the case with "*différance*" (which is neither a thing nor a concept), "in context," and with caution, for such questions are deeply enmeshed "in social activism – feminism, race or national or cultural politics –," which requires us to be "wary about so-called identity politics,"[41] as Penelope Deutscher duly notes. It is indeed difficult, when reflecting on the word "feminine," to avoid the complex network of meanings it inevitably conjures up (like femininity, sexual difference, feminism, gender norms, familial genealogy). From the outset, Derrida's work has dealt with the deconstruction of phallocentrism, putting "this question at the center of the philosophical discourse,"[42] as he somewhat equivocally says himself. But if Derrida's

[37] Ibid., 94. [38] Ibid., 96.

[39] See Anne Emmanuelle Berger, "The Ends of an Idiom, or Sexual Difference in Translation," in *The Queer Turn in Feminism: Identities, Sexualities, and the Theater of Gender*, trans. Catherine Porter (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 107–25. The original title in French, *Le grand théâtre du genre. Identités, Sexualités et Féminisme en "Amérique"* (Paris: Belin, 2013), itself plays on this idiomatic difference, the English translation stressing the "queer turn" (resonating with the famous *The Turn of the Screw*), but erasing the problematic "America" in question.

[40] Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 42. In his comparison of Derrida and Butler, Peter Benson argues that "No such concept has yet emerged within the philosophical deconstruction of gender. The concept of drag cannot fulfill this role because, as Butler recognizes, 'there is no necessary relation between drag and subversion' because 'the denaturalization of gender [can be] the very vehicle for a reconsolidation of hegemonic norms.'" Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 121.

[41] Penelope Deutscher, "Culture, Gender and Politics," in *How to Read Derrida* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 47.

[42] Jacques Derrida, "Interview," with Kristine McKenna, *LA Weekly* (November 2002); reprinted in *Derrida*, 121.

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contribution to this issue remains decisive, it is not only because of the analyses of Rousseau's "dangerous supplement" and of the "incest/insect" motif in *Of Grammatology*, not only because of notions like hymen or double invagination, or of the original way of thinking sexual and generic gender and genre in "The Law of Genre,"[43] or, later still, of his discussion of genius (a word normally masculine in French but here parsed as a feminine for Hélène Cixous, just as she had invented for Derrida a masculine ant, "*le fourmi*" instead of the correct feminine word *la fourmi*, in "Ants"[44]), a concept that comes precisely to block genealogies – no, if Derrida's contribution remains decisive in order to think sexual difference, it is above all because of his position as a reader, that is insofar as he reconfigures the concept of reading as such, as for example in "Heidegger's Hand": "For I never 'criticize' Heidegger without recalling that that can be done from other places in his own text. His text could not be homogeneous and is written with two hands, at least."[45] It is such an oscillation that has been privileged in his readings since *Spurs*, whether he discusses Genet, Ponge, Nietzsche or Heidegger. Sarah Kofman was one of the first commentators who noted that this oscillation was Derrida's distinctive mark, a signature resisting any stabilization in *Glas* ("*My excitement [émoi] is the oscillation*"[46]). One can recall here the warning Derrida gave about *Spurs* and its counter-readings isolating the most violently anti-feminine declarations of Nietzsche, for the issue is that of the same "perverse" effects that erase sexual differences by replaying "difference [la *différance*] as an oppositional duality [which] tends to homogenize" and "delete all sexual differences"[47]:

> Since these typical features are and must be unstable, sometimes contradictory, and finally "undecidable," any break in the movement of the reading would settle in a counter-meaning, in *the meaning* which becomes counter-meaning. This counter-meaning can be more or less naive or

[43] Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," trans. Avital Ronell, *Glyph* 7 (1980): 202–32.
[44] Jacques Derrida, "Ants," trans. Eric Prenowitz, *Oxford Literary Review* 24, no. 1 (July 2002): 18.
[45] Derrida, "*Geschlecht*," 189.
[46] Derrida, *Glas* (Paris: Galilée, 1974), 145b, quoted by Sarah Kofman in "Ça cloche," 115. In fact, the quote from Jean Genet's text has been cut (castrated?) by Kofman; here is how Genet's text is quoted in *Glas*: "My excitement [*Mon émoi*] is the oscillation from one to the other," meaning from the flowers to the convicts. This is a footnote about which Derrida asks: "Whose excitement? The author's? The narrator's? Who signs in the margin [*en note*] and bottom of the page? Since excitement is oscillation ("My excitement is the oscillation . . . "), the *I* is carried away, divided, moved aside in(to) the trait that relates it to anything whatsoever. Undecidable it too in its signature." *Glas*, trans. John P. Leavey Jr. and Richard Rand (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 127b.
[47] Derrida, "My Sunday 'Humanities,'" in *Paper Machine*, 104.

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> complacent. One could cite countless examples of it. In the most perfunctory of cases, the simplification reverts to the isolation of Nietzsche's violently anti-feminist statements . . ., pulling them out (and possibly attributing them to me though that is of little importance) of the movement and system that I try to reconstitute . . . Generally speaking, this cannot be considered reading, and I will go so far as to say that it is *to not read* the syntax and punctuation of a given sentence when one arrests the text in a certain position, thus settling on a thesis, meaning or truth.[48]

If we had to single out one feature that we would inherit and keep forever "after Derrida," it would be the provocative law that he nearly formalized in his seminal interview with Derek Attridge, when he stated that "sometimes the texts which are most phallocentric or phallogocentric in their themes . . . can also be, in some cases, the most deconstructive."[49] He continues: "There are sometimes more deconstructive resources . . . in some texts by Joyce or Ponge, who are often phallocentric or phallogocentric in appearance, than in some texts which, thematically, are theatrically 'feminist.'"[50] Or again:

> Some texts signed by women can be thematically anti-phallocentric and powerfully logocentric . . . Without a demanding reading of what articulates logocentrism and phallogocentrism, in other words without a consequential deconstruction, feminist discourse risks reproducing very crudely the very thing which it is purports to be criticizing.[51]

This warning was recognized as a "potential contribution by Derrida to a feminist practice"[52] by many feminist philosophers, critics and theorists, however critical they may have been of other aspects of Derrida's approach. "The suggestion seems to be that any feminism should be accompanied with a simultaneous effort to deconstruct feminism. This can be a constructive contribution to feminism."[53]

Nevertheless, the relationship between Derrida and feminist discourses (especially Anglo-American ones) has been tense, to say the least. Even as he was denouncing the repression of women "perpetuated in the philosophical groundings of phallocentrism,"[54] and declaring his alliance with feminine culture, Derrida also expressed "reservations about some manifestations of feminism,"[55] as, in his eyes, "to simply invert the hierarchy, or for women to appropriate the most negative aspects of what's

[48] Derrida, "Choreographies," 95–96. Derrida underlines.
[49] Derrida, "'This Strange Institution Called Literature,'" 58. [50] Ibid. [51] Ibid., 60.
[52] Penelope Deutscher, "'Women, and so on': *Rogues* and the Autoimmunity of Feminism," *Symposium* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 104.
[53] Deutscher, *How to Read Derrida*, 49. [54] Derrida, "Interview," in *Derrida*, 121. [55] Ibid.

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conventionally viewed as masculine behavior benefits no one."[56] Derrida warned feminists against the risk of legitimation of women's studies, which threatens to make them the guardians of the law once recognized and sanctioned by universities. Derrida evinced skepticism facing an axiomatic notion like that of progress, and he even took some distance from the very idea of "liberation" insofar as it remains "at once punctuated by determinable stages and commanded by an ultimately thinkable *telos*, a truth of sexual difference and femininity, etc."[57] Derrida went as far as to call this representation of progress an idealization or even a "sinister mystification"[58] because it carried in its wake metaphysical values such as reappropriation, autonomy, mastery, sovereignty and so on. For Derrida, this moment of the feminist "revolution" is nothing but a specular reversal, a repetition working from within the phallocentric tradition that it wanted to subvert. For his part, he called upon a conception of history:

> a history of paradoxical laws and non-dialectical discontinuities, a history of absolutely heterogeneous pockets, irreducible particularities, of unheard-of and incalculable sexual differences, a history of women . . . inventing sexual idioms at a distance from the main forum of feminist activity with a kind of reserve that does not necessarily prevent them from subscribing to the movement and even, occasionally, from becoming a militant for it.[59]

Thus one will not be surprised that notorious passages like this one, from *Spurs*:

> Feminism is nothing but the operation of a woman who aspires to be like a man. And in order to resemble the masculine dogmatic philosopher this woman lays claim – just as much claim as he – to truth, science, and objectivity in all their castrated delusions of virility. Feminism too seeks to castrate. It wants a castrated woman. Gone the style.[60]

or the statement that "there is no place for woman"[61] should have been received as provocations by certain feminist theoreticians. Derrida was aware of the risks created by a position that he himself described as neither anti-feminist nor feminist. Such an oscillation between "neither" and "nor" could not but trigger resistance: "Feminists were divided in their response. Some saw considerable potential in a deconstructive feminism, while others were caustic about Derrida, perceiving an appropriation of feminist reflection."[62] If, in a first moment, feminist critique profited from the deconstruction of sexual difference (notably with feminist

[56] Ibid., 121. [57] Derrida, "Choreographies," 91. [58] Ibid. [59] Ibid., 93.
[60] Derrida, *Spurs*, 52. [61] Derrida, "Choreographies," 93.
[62] Deutscher, *How to Read Derrida*, 48.

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psychoanalytic critics, Marxist feminists and feminist deconstructors such as Shoshana Felman, Peggy Kamuf, Jane Gallop, Gayatri Spivak and Barbara Johnson), the gap between feminist critique and deconstruction widened for reasons well summed up by Elizabeth Meese, who evokes "the issues underlying the fears feminism and deconstruction have of one another"[63]:

> American academic feminism fears deconstruction because (1) the latter denies critical pluralism its mask of inclusion, seeing pluralism instead as a capitulation to the center, both forcing and denying choice; (2) further, deconstruction denies certainty to Feminism's ethical vision, demanding that it reveal the exclusions, the traces that are covered over in order to make any such unicentered, coherent narrative of identity possible . . . ; and (3), deconstruction would force feminism to (dis)articulate itself in terms of an as-yet-unimaginable end, an unending drama with a changeable cast. Deconstruction likewise fears feminism because (1) the latter wants to write female desire in nonoppositional, nonmasculine, or nonheterosexist terms; (2) further, feminism wants male deconstructive critics to refuse their power over women, to read and respond to texts written by women, and to apply the practices of deconstruction to their own phallogocentrism in the interest of unsettling male heterosexual and homosocial privilege . . . ; and (3) finally, feminism challenges male deconstructors to review the knowledge of centuries, constructed through (among other things) the repression or absence of women to permit the production of the particular androcentric, heterosexist, racist narrative we call Western Civilization.[64]

The relations between deconstruction and feminism (two terms that should always be used in the plural) generated many misunderstandings – but let us not forget that this is a positive concept for Derrida, because a dispute (a *différend*) can keep open the possibility of a critical dialogue to come and reveal historical and cultural differences in the translation of philosophical concepts, as Anne-Emmanuelle Berger has shown in *The Queer Turn in Feminism.*[65] One can note that the term "gender" was rarely used by Derrida, as Peggy Kamuf has underlined.[66] Derrida has also been taken to task for having avoided to read closely women philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir, for instance, a reproach that is not without ground if one recalls the almost total absence of discussions with

[63] Elizabeth A. Meese, "(Ex)Tensions: Feminist Criticism and Deconstruction," in *(Ex)tensions: Refiguring Feminist Criticism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 18.
[64] Ibid., 18–19.
[65] See Anne-Emmanuelle Berger, *Le Grand Théâtre du Genre: Identités, sexualités et féminisme en Amérique* (Paris: Belin, 2013).
[66] See Kamuf, "Derrida and Gender," 82–83.

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philosophers like Sarah Kofman, Luce Irigaray, Judith Butler or Élisabeth de Fontenay in his work. As Deutscher notes, if Derrida comments on Madame de Maintenon in *Given Time* and on Hannah Arendt in *History of the Lie* (as well as in several seminars, including the seminar on "Forgiving and perjuring"), properly philosophical discussions with feminine philosophical authors remain rare. With women writers, if one excepts Hélène Cixous, few belong to Derrida's privileged corpus; he names George Eliot, George Sand, Virginia Woolf and Gertrude Stein and calls them "immensely great modern writers,"[67] but questions the fact that their texts are "simply non- or anti-phallogocentric"[68] and never devotes a full-fledged study to them.[69] However, one should also stress the crucial role that Derrida grants to figures like that of Echo, of Dibutades (*Memoirs of the Blind*), of Gradiva (*Archive Fever*), of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* ("What Is a 'Relevant' Translation?"), of Molly Bloom's Yes-Laughter (*Ulysses Gramophone*). One can also think of his fruitful collaborations with authors like Anne Dufourmantelle (*Of Hospitality*), Élisabeth Roudinesco (*For What Tomorrow...*) or Catherine Malabou (*Counterpath*), and with artists such as Camilla Adami, Colette Deblé, Marie-Françoise Plissart, Micaëla Henich and Safaa Fathy.

But above all, and this is what is most important, Derrida has never stopped taking into account "the most lethal explosions of a violence that is inevitably ethnico-religious ... women in particular are singled out as victims (not 'only' of murders, but also of the rapes and mutilations that precede or accompany them)."[70] His most essential political contribution to the question of the feminine is to be found without any doubt in *Politics of Friendship*, in which he "offered a reading of the exclusion of women from ideals of political association,"[71] and probed "the relationship between the political bond and the metaphors of fraternity, the constitutive exclusion of the daughter and sister from the political"[72]:

> The fratriarchy may *include* cousins and sisters but, as we will see, including may also come to mean neutralizing. Including may dictate forgetting, for

[67] Derrida, "'This Strange Institution Called Literature,'" 59. [68] Ibid.

[69] This assessment might have to be nuanced once the totality of the seminars and classes given by Derrida is published; thus in the seminar "Life Death" (1975), he quotes *Camera obscura* by Sarah Kofman; in the seminar "Forgiving and Perjury" (1998–99), he analyzes at length Antje Krog's *Country of My Skull* in connection with the issue of rape and testimony in the framework of the Committee on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa.

[70] Derrida, "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of 'Religion' at the Limits of Reason Alone," trans. Samuel Weber, in *Religion*, ed. Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 49.

[71] Deutscher, "'Women, and so on,'" 101. [72] Ibid., 103.

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> example, with "the best of all intentions," that the sister will never provide a docile example for the concept of fraternity . . . This could be one of our most insistent questions.[73]

In *Of Hospitality*, he returns to the figure of Antigone via another angle than in *Glas*, that is by broaching the issue of mourning and the tears of Œdipus's daughters; in another session of the seminar on "Hostipitality," he evokes the link between mourning, tears and ghostly returns with a story that he finds in Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Brésil.* De Léry describes how the women of these tribes welcome the white visitors, those conquerors taken for specters, with their abundant tears; as he tells all future scholars in *Specters of Marx*, it is a fact that women knew already how to address ghosts and talk to them. In a similar fashion, in *Memoirs of the Blind*, only the crying women of the last drawings of the exhibit were granted the privilege of ushering in another "story of the eye," an eye made not only to see but also to cry. In *Veils*, Derrida renders his homage to Cixous by inscribing her "as the only woman in this genealogy of night,"[74] raising her "to genius in this great lineage of prophetic poets,"[75] alongside "Homer, Milton, Nietzsche, Joyce, Borges," Furthermore, he expresses his admiration to Cixous, not without a touch of envy, because she has managed to end her mourning: "Like me, but quite differently, she does her mourning for the veil (as for me, I'd like to have done with mourning, she has perhaps already succeeded in that)."[76] The same analysis would obtain when we see him acknowledging her priority in her treatment of dreams in "Ants" and in *Geneses, Genealogies, Genres, and Genius* (2006). Derrida underscores the "almighty" fiction of Cixous with a rare force in *H. C. for Life, That Is to Say. . .* (2006) by elaborating a subjunctive mode in which potentiality and virtuality surpass all grammatical norms. Such a "might" is a modalized power (*puisse*) that is so mighty that it becomes an "absolute performative"[77] that precedes and exceeds any ontological main clause ("The wish comes before everything; it lives before everything, before knowing [*savoir*], having [*avoir*], being able [*pouvoir*], even wanting [*vouloir*]"[78]).

The manner in which Derrida rethinks the issue of unconditional hospitality, which is linked with what he calls democracy-to-come, is also

[73] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, viii. Hélène Cixous has discussed the sister issue in *Insister of Jacques Derrida*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).
[74] Derrida, "A Silkworm of One's Own," 51. [75] Ibid.
[76] Derrida, "A Silkworm of One's Own," 50.
[77] Derrida, *H. C. for Life, That Is to Say. . .*, trans. Laurent Milesi and Stefan Herbrechter (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 104.
[78] Ibid., 61.

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associated with the question of the feminine and with the "historically changing political status of women [which] takes its place within this articulation."[79] In *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas*, while questioning the alternative between "an androcentric hyperbole and a feminist one" ("Is there any place for such a choice in ethics? And in justice? In law? In politics? Nothing is less certain"[80]), he strongly affirms his position, namely that from now on "whatever we might say about it, we would do well to remember, even if silently, that this thought of welcome, there at the opening of ethics, is indeed marked by sexual difference. Such sexual difference will never again be neutralized. The absolute, absolute originary welcome, indeed, the pre-original welcome, the welcoming par excellence, is feminine."[81] In *Voyous* (for which there is no "corresponding"[82] feminine noun), Derrida associates, as in *Fichus*, women, minors and foreigners, calling women's improving rights as the emblem of democracy's unending perfectibility. Yet as is the case with democracy, both perfectible *and* pervertible,[83] "Derrida's sense of perfectibility implies that legal, social or political reforms could never be thoroughly justifiable. Perfectibility is a paradoxical concept, based on the notion of improvement whose problem is that we are exposed to a future which alters, in an unknown way, the certainties of what seems to us progress."[84] Already in the seminar "Women in the Beehive," Derrida analyzed how this dychrony was at work within the very question of sexual difference.[85] Derrida's position is consistent with his hypothesis regarding sexual difference and the importance given to discontinuity, distancing, interruption and what he calls the "in-between between the two,"[86] "the

[79] Deutscher, "Derrida's Impossible Genealogies."

[80] Derrida, *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 44.

[81] Ibid., 44–45.

[82] See Hélène Cixous, "Jacques Derrida: Co-responding Voix You," trans. Peggy Kamuf, in *Derrida and the Time of the Political*, ed. Pheng Cheah and Suzanne Guerlac (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 41–52.

[83] A pervertibility that Derrida, again, closely links to sexual difference: "The experience of pervertibility . . ., which at once calls for and excludes the third, here appears indissociably linked to sexual difference." Derrida, *Adieu*, 43.

[84] Deutscher, "Derrida's Impossible Genealogies."

[85] Derrida, "Women in the Beehive," 195. "By analogy [with the motif of undecidability], we could say the same about 'woman.' There is one meaning to the word 'woman' which is caught in the opposition, in the couple, and to this extent you can use the force of woman to reverse, to undermine this first stage of opposition. Once you have succeeded, the word 'woman' does not have the same meaning. Perhaps we could not even speak of 'woman' anymore. Of course, these two stages are not chronologically altered. Sometimes you can make the two gestures at the same time, and sometimes you cannot go from one to the other."

[86] Derrida, "Ants," 22.

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spacing of contretemps": "*my other hypothesis being that there are no appointments without the space of the contretemps, without the spacing of the contretemps, and there is no contretemps without sexual difference, as if sexual difference were contretemps itself.*" [87]

Therefore, it is essential to stress that, for Derrida, sexual difference is (if indeed it *is*) above all "a scene of reading, a reading of sexual difference," [88] the double genitive signifying "*that there is no asexual, a-sexed or meta-sexed reading of sexual difference because it is at once read and reading.*" [89] In the many exchanges between Derrida and Hélène Cixous about sexual difference (that she abbreviated as D.S. for *différance sexuelle* but also calling up "déesse" (a goddess), all these signifiers stressing speed, mobility and the power of transforming identities), Derrida underlined in a famous passage of "Ants" that sexual difference, a French expression that is idiomatic, was not a pure concept that could be universally translated. It could not be abstractly universalized, or be exported to any context, history, culture and so forth. Derrida never ceased, on the other hand, to reject the "assumption of visibility" [90] that continued to define it if not really found it. As he writes in "Ants," "*Une fourmi* can be seen [*se voit*] perhaps but already to challenge you to identify the sex of this little black living creature. As for *un fourmi*, it is already the adventure of reading and interpretation, it swarms [*fourmille*] with thousands of meanings [*mille et un sens*], a thousand and one [*une*] images, a thousand and one [*un*] sexes." [91] In "A Silkworm of One's Own," he returns via the bombyx, those Chinese silkworms that he raised in a shoebox as a child, to this imperceptible and invisible sexual difference: "*But it was impossible to discern a sex.*" [92] This difference from before sexual duality ("*the extruded saliva of a very fine sperm, shiny, gleaming, the miracle of a feminine ejaculation . . . The self-displacement of this little fantasy of a penis, was it erection or detumescence?*" [93]) is irreducible to the logic of visibility ("*without seeing anything*"), for sexual difference is only "promised in this way to reading" [94]:

> But thenceforth, sexual difference remains to be interpreted, deciphered, decrypted, read and not seen. Legible, therefore invisible, an object of testimony and not proof – and in the same way problematic, mobile, uncertain, it goes by, it is in passage, it passes from one [*l'une*] to the other, by one and the other [*par l'un et par l'autre*], from one [*l'une*] to the other like *une fourmi, un fourmi* of a dream. [95]

[87] Ibid., 24. [88] Ibid., 22. [89] Ibid., 29. [90] Berger, *The Queer Turn in Feminism*, 126.
[91] Derrida, "Ants," 19. [92] Derrida, "A Silkworm of One's Own," 88. [93] Ibid., 89.
[94] Derrida, "Ants," 19. [95] Ibid., 21.

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Derrida critiques this demand for visibility in its double value as veridictional and jurisdictional, as Berger states. He is always wary of equating vision, taken to be the transparence of experience, with positive knowledge and power. Moreover, while recalling that the cut, section and divisibility are always implied in sexuality, he insists that one should not be taken in by the staging of the scene, by its appearance or evidence, especially when it comes to the division of roles and all the aspects touching on pairs, parity, partition, couples and so forth. He describes the two conditions of this "reading" or "interpretation" of sexual difference:

> *On the one hand*, it must be said that we are *interpreting* sexual difference in the sense that we are reading it, which is to say without seeing it, only so as to bear witness to it beyond the anatomical fact, beyond the proof of the civil status, beyond every system of so-called objective criteria of sexual identification – thus by passing from *seeing* to *reading; on the other hand*, we must remember the absolute leap that, in passing from *seeing* to *reading*, presupposes such an experience, such an endurance of blindness, such a test of witnessing, where it involves the abocular moment . . ., such an act of faith, therefore, that she [Hélène Cixous] and I could well have, we could still and we would always take the wrong place in play/by playing, pretend to play at mistaking our place without meaning to, interpret the role of the other and at every instant cross the line of the assigned partition.[96]

Thus sexual difference does not evoke for Derrida stable or separate identities, even if they are "playful," "produced" or "constructed," which marks his distance from *gender* or *queer studies*, the production of stable and separate identities always serving the establishment and perpetuation of hierarchies. And it is not the issue of a sexual identity, a complex process implying identifications, transferences, cultural and social assignations, that interests him. The conceptualization produced by Derrida does not proceed from a thinking of diversity (which maintains the principle of identity and pulls together) but from a thinking of difference that ruins every claim to identity and divides, disturbing it from within, as Berger sees it very well.[97] For Derrida, sexual difference, like *différance*, is a movement, it begins in or from a passage "from one to the other, by one and the other, from one to the other like *une fourmi, un fourmi* of a dream." While passing, sexual difference unexpectedly switches over from one line to the next. Like Cixous, who in her readings of sexual difference is singularly attentive to the "who" or "what" that still "meandrogynes, that invents and saves the fragile, sumptuous mysteries of differences: sexual differences,

[96] Ibid., 36. Derrida underlines. [97] Berger, *The Queer Turn in Feminism*, 104.

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and also 'properly individual difference,' the one which prevents an individual still alive, still formless, from being instituted and cadaverised in the state of a sexual, social identity, or of an identity of age and species,"[98] Derrida is interested above all in a sexual difference that remains both troubling and troubled, disoriented and disorienting, opening up, like the silkworms in the shoebox, discourse in every sense.[99] Neither doctrine nor ideology, sexual difference is both offered freely and impregnable, for it is untamable: it rests in the "secret of the idiom," and moreover, as Derrida sees it, it constitutes "the very limit of readability."[100] Sexing *différance* is a fabulous, *formidable* event in its unforeseeable performativity according to the hypothesis that "as soon as there is sexual difference, there are words, or rather traces to *be read*. It begins *there* [*par là*]."[101]

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[98] Hélène Cixous, "Seeing with the Tongue. The Lispector Apocalypse," trans. Laurent Milesi, *Matador* (2012): 24–25.

[99] Berger, *The Queer Turn in Feminism*, 125. I echo here Berger's thesis.

[100] Derrida, "Ants," 17.

[101] Ibid., 20–21. Derrida underlines.

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