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Canopy of the Upturned Eye: Writing on Derrida’s Crypt

MARIA O’CONNOR

What is a crypt? No crypt presents itself. The grounds [lieux] are so disposed as to disguise and to hide: something, always a body in some way. But also to disguise the act of hiding and to hide the disguise: the crypt hides as it holds.

—Derrida, Fors

F

–D. In secret, in truth, it is Freud who signed his texts. Every one of them. At least, that is what we are led to believe, what he leads us to believe in. It will have been the restricted economy of a titular imperative to think the possibility of Freud after him, that would lead us to co–sign, to consign him to the Freudian archive, the living dead. Already twenty–six years ago William Kerrigan and Joseph Smith had suggested: “He reads Freud as Freud read himself and others—with an eye toward the contingent, the haphazard, the chance event or lapse. [. . .] overdetermination and chance are always co–implicated. Here is the place where Freud and Derrida meet. This is the point of Derrida’s deepest, though ambivalent, indebtedness to Freud” (viii–ix).

“An eye toward the contingent.” How does one have an “eye toward the contingent”? How does one plan for, record, or recoup the chance event, even, more so, the lapse? It is true, psychoanalysis, that which Freud names, engages the impossible recoup of the irrecoverable. Deconstruction may never have reached that destination.
Reappropriation or mourning—work, who would decide? We know there is more than a little debris from this band, this bind or stricture, a little breakage of the mirror, a little tolling for . . . Our eye is towards nothing. It is “upturned,” immured. Our consigning of Freud after Derrida writes on the crypts and ghosts of psychoanalysis yet breaks into nothing other than the canopy of this upturned eye. Our stratagems: the secret, the crypt, the ghost, the trans–phenomenal psychoanalysis of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, Jacques Derrida’s Fors. Yet it is sexual difference that will be our question.

In Specters of Marx, Derrida, in the name of what we might call “hauntology,” establishes a series of concerns that have become ours: a respect for the ghost, the revenant, that complicates a metaphysics of presence through a spectral figure that is neither present nor absent, dead nor alive; a temporality of the contretemps, of a time–out–of–joint, of a time of a Freud after a Derrida, which is also the time of the arrivant, the future–to–come. We cannot avoid, as well, the final word of Specters, and the final note which quotes from Derrida’s The Post Card: “Here Freud and Heidegger, I conjoin them within me like the two great ghosts of the ‘great epoch.’ The two surviving grandfathers. They did not know each other, but according to me they form a couple, and in fact just because of that, this singular anachrony” (196). “Within me,” “they did not know each other,” and they did not know him. Yet he is always already co–signed, two surviving grandfathers, two living on, suggesting there is no Derrida without them. There is also Nietzsche, the one Freud disinherit, the one to whom Heidegger devoted his most sustained effort. Derrida cites him in The Ear of the Other: “I am my father and my mother; I am my dead father and my living mother. I am their crypt and they both speak to me. They both speak in me so whatever I say, they address it to each other” (58–59). He then goes on to comment: “When it’s a text that one is trying to decipher or decrypt using these concepts and these motifs, or when one is looking for a ghost or a crypt in a text, then things get still more difficult, or let us say more novel. I say a ghost and a crypt: actually the theory of the ‘ghost’ is not exactly the theory of the ‘crypt.’ It’s even more complicated. Although it’s also connected to the crypt, the ghost is more precisely the effect of another’s crypt in my unconscious” (Ear 59).

Derrida’s “crypt” is an operation we will come to name “Nietzschean,” that shatters a certain dialectical movement in relation to an economy which puts in play the living dead and does not permit any sublation of the cadaver. This “living dead” is “an irreducible doubleness” and “split dialectic of the negative” of a divided self to which the crypt alludes, a self occupied by another’s crypt in the unconscious. This ghost is decipherable at the level of language and, more precisely, as languages themselves, bodies passing through a locus irreducible to sexual difference. Nietzsche says as much:
There, this is who I am, a certain masculine and a certain feminine. *Ich bin der und der*, a phrase which means all these things. You will not be able to hear and understand my name unless you hear it with an ear attuned to the name of the dead man and the living feminine—the double and divided name of the father who is dead and the mother living on, who will, moreover, outlive me long enough to bury me. The mother is living on, and this living on is the name of the mother. This survival is my life whose shores she overflows. And my father’s name, in other words my patronym? That is the name of death, of my dead life. (qtd. in Derrida, *Ear* 54)

Here exists an irreducible doubleness as Nietzsche names two laws, two sexes, life and death (53). These are laws between the dead father’s signature, inheritance of concepts, as the law of proper names and the living mother, the one who hears—reads—interprets and is without proper name as the ear of the other that signs the text (51). Nietzsche’s feminine operation is “survival as the ultimate addressee in the phantasm, because he writes for her” (53). Our hypothesis is that it/id, the feminine operation, marks all texts as the irreducibly doubling plurality of an address across what Nietzsche sites as the dead–father and mother–who–lives–on. Ultimately at stake in this exhumation with respect to an acknowledgment of a ghost as sexual difference are the consequences with respect to them becoming the signatories of the work. This would suggest texts are written for, addressed to both the living and the dead, singularly and, perhaps, always and in general.

2010 is a centennial year for psychoanalysis, perhaps one of the great centenaries of its myriad commitments to repetition. It was in 1910 that Sergei Constantinovitch Pankeiev, a young and wealthy Russian, came to Freud for treatment, commencing what the *Standard Edition* suggests is nothing less than “the most elaborate and no doubt the most important of all of Freud’s case histories” (XVII: 3). Sergei appeared in February; the history was written up, finished, by early November. It was not published for another four years. The case is titled “From the History of an Infantile Neurosis,” better known as “The Wolf Man.” Why does it hold such an esteemed place in Freud’s work? It was decisive for Freud to prove, against Adler and Jung, that the phenomenon of infantile sexuality exists. But more so, according to Nicholas Rand, the case shored up the three “cardinal tenets” of psychoanalysis as Freud invented it: the unconscious, infantile sexuality, and the Oedipus complex (lii). Abraham and Torok suggest something further. Contrary to the *Standard Edition’s* emphasis on the “extraordinary literary skill with which Freud has handled the case” in producing a work that “avoids the dangers of confusion and obscurity” (XVII: 6), Abraham and Torok stress something else: “Freud’s exposition is marred by an insidious incredulity” (2). They emphasize what an astute reader would recognize as Freud’s own doubts about his statements.
Moreover, they suggest that this ferment of “unconscious doubt” was itself productive of what appears to be an unrelated or “seemingly remote field of research,” “Mourning and Melancholia,” whose first draft appeared in 1914, the year of the case’s publication. Abraham and Torok read “The Wolf Man” neither as the shoring up of the origins of psychoanalysis, nor as that to be accommodated in the “late Freud,” but rather as a contretemps, what they call the moment of “isolation,” the “break” itself, neither as the early nor the late Freud. “The Wolf Man” is read with “Mourning and Melancholia.”

In Fors, the foreword to their radical re–working of “The Wolf Man” case, Derrida approaches directly the literary–mytho–poetic psychoanalysis of Abraham and Torok in order to deconstruct the works of mourning and memory, as the narrative of what never happened. Through a deconstruction of the crypt, Derrida addresses his spectral differences and theirs. In doing so, he strategically maintains an ethical distance from any explicit reference to the ghost, phantom, or hauntology that positions their conceptual differences from his. Here we attempt to maintain this difference, marked by silence, in recognition of the feminine operation of a living–on of spectral signatories, ghost workings not found within a crypt but founded on and structured by a crypt. This structure is a partitioning architecture, what we come to understand by Derrida’s notion of “tropological archi–text–tonics.” In our reading of Fors we sign the differences (Derrida’s, Abraham and Torok’s) with both hands: initially on a coincidence of what can never be comprehended but is always inscribed in the secret of the crypt as ghost work. And, then, with the other, there is the silent yet acknowledged refusal by Derrida as an ethical gesture, that marks out his approach to Abraham and Torok’s radical rethinking of the ghost in psychoanalysis. As Colin Davis suggests in État Présent, the core difference between the two hauntologies is to be located in the status of the secret:

The secrets of Abraham’s and Torok’s lying phantoms are unspeakable in the restricted sense of being a subject of shame and prohibition. It is not at all that they cannot be spoken; on the contrary, they can and should be put into words so that the phantom and its noxious effects on the living can be exorcized. For Derrida, the ghost and its secrets are unspeakable in quite a different sense. Abraham and Torok seek to return the ghost to the order of knowledge; Derrida wants to avoid any restoration and to encounter what is strange, unheard, other, about the ghost. For Derrida, the ghost’s secret is not a puzzle to be solved; it is the structural openness or address directed towards the living by the voices of the past or the not yet formulated possibilities of the future. The secret is not unspeakable because it is taboo, but because it cannot not (yet) be articulated in the languages available to us. The ghost pushes at the boundaries of language and thought. The interest here, then,
is not in secrets, understood as puzzles to be resolved, but in secrecy, now elevated to what Castricanno calls “the structural enigma which inaugurates the scene of writing” (Cryptomimesis, p. 30). (379)

From a Nietzschean operation of the crypt and sexual difference, the hauntology of a patronym and a living–on, we engage Fors’s secrecy on sexual difference. It strikes us as an enigmatic discourse opened through the structural haunting of Derrida’s crypt, as the not–yet–formulated possibilities (in)articulated in its text. This arrivant, this future–to–come—Freud after Derrida—is a going–beyond of psychoanalysis toward differences (sexual, psychoanalytic, literary, philosophical) as a going–beyond the work of mourning, as an “end” to mourning as such that would not throw up the ruse of an “end” as sublimated progression of a labour–without–end. He would want to keep safe, even from himself, pocketed deep, that possibility. His signatories, his co–signatories, F–H, are anything but the ear who signs without a proper name. Her signatures, mother(s) as the name for living–on, are without remains, his ashes, his secret, even to the grave.

When the question “What is a crypt?” followed by “What if I were writing on one now?” opens Derrida’s essay “Foreword: Fors: The Anglish Words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok,” we are immediately drawn into a spatio–temporal scene with respect to textuality (xi). Derrida’s essay is partitioned by an interpretation of Abraham and Torok’s concept of the crypt, derived from their anasemic technique they name “cryptonomy.” The essay is also partitioned by Derrida’s own notion of the crypt staged through a de(com)position of inside and outside boundaries via his magic (ghost) word fors. Key to Abraham and Torok’s analyses is the notion of anasemia as that which disrupts the linearity of before and after, as that which may not have taken place. Anasemia complicates psychoanalytic relations between the conscious and unconscious. The word itself suggests a complicating process to the production of meaning, to the seme as a unit of meaning. As a prefix, ana variously infers a moving back–to, a moving upwards, a reversal, return to the elemental, what cannot be broken down any more. “‘Anasemia’ is thus a process of problematising the meaning of signs in an undetermined way” (Abraham and Torok 117n1). In Fors the topos of the crypt is used to approach the question of psychoanalysis, its methods and discourses, relations of analysis and analysand. The anasemic program produces through other means of language–poems, fictive monologues, quasi–autobiographical forms—the “original event” which may have been “the ‘deciphered’ poem of what took place without taking place, without having been present, ‘of what has never been.’ There is a
memory left of what has never been, and to this strange rememoration [anamnèse] only a mythical narrative is suitable, a poetic narrative, but a narrative belonging to the age of psychoanalysis, arch–psychoanalysis and anasemia, ‘as fantastic as a fairy tale,’ perhaps, but ‘as rigorous as mathematics’” (Fors xxxiii). The vast anasemic space is a space of translation. But the poetic translation is not an application, nor verification, a follow–up; it belongs to the process of analytic deciphering in its most active, inaugural, ground–breaking phase, worked through from all directions, invested with a new theory of poetic rhythm or rhyme, with a metapsychological remodelling. This would not be the interior to psychoanalysis proper but rather a radical break within psychoanalysis specifically with respect to theories of readability and interpretation, extending across the disciplinary borders of literature, philosophy (in particular phenomenology), and psychoanalysis. Explicitly, Abraham and Torok’s interlacing of disciplinary discourses engages an archaeological exhumation of the between of discourses, the compositional structure of analyses—with its analysis on composition—and the topographical disclosure of relations between truth and desire, fiction and testimony, trauma and re–covery, self and other as a series of interweaving relations that produce the textual scene of encryption, of crypt–building, of crypt upon crypt, with a tri–partitioning structure: Topoi (Les Lieux), Death (Atopos), and The Cipher (Mortgage), a third position of the secret that produces Derrida’s crypt. The three demarcate Derrida’s deconstructive movement with respect to the textual enterprise of language and its relation to trauma: “Neither a metaphor nor a literal meaning, the displacement I am going to follow here obeys a different tropography. That displacement takes the form of everything a crypt implies: topoi, death, cipher. These things are the crypt’s same. They can be neither dissociated nor hierarchically ordered. They do not form a multiplicity of separable predicates, the contingent or essential attributes of a crypt. Their being together did not just happen; their unity is irreducible only with respect to the crypt they constitute through and through: The unity is only thinkable from out of this crypt, here” (Fors xiii–xiv). Abraham and Torok operate between the discourses of psychoanalysis and literature and Fors produces a third economy of the text hidden within these grounds as the allegory of anasemia and deconstruction. Derrida’s economy of the cipher breaks in as it breaks apart the enterprise of analysis, its laws and tribunals and, for this reason, invents another question of psyche, an–other between psychoanalysis, literature, and deconstruction. Text takes place secretly, in hiding, marked by libidinal forces where contradiction in the guise of prohibition and forbidden pleasure is at first indelibly marked as pre–linguistic, then encrypted. This textual enterprise re–marks on encryption constitutive of all deciphering, reading, comprehension, and meaning as analysis per se: “Without contradiction within desire, nothing would be
comprehensible,” engaging a movement across the “violence of mute forces that would be setting up the [en]crypt [ion] . . . passing from one part of the divided Self to the other” (Fors xv). This double–scene of encryption and decipherment, saving the text in the production of the text’s cryptic hiding, locates Derrida’s deconstruction and Abraham and Torok’s anasemic program in their thinking through trauma as death, introjections, and incorporation, and its partitioning effects on the self and other. That which is not nameable, as pre–linguistic, secret, and hidden, survives in language as artifice. This unnameable Thing/Word lives on as language’s artifice: “The interior is partitioned off from the interior. The most inward safe (the crypt as an artificial unconscious, as the Self’s artifact) becomes the outcast (Hormis: except for, save, fors), the outside (foris) with respect to the outer safe (the Self) that includes it without comprehending it, in order to comprehend nothing in it (Fors xix, emph. Derrida’s). This excluded inside/inside that is equally an outside/inside will become our threshold for a coincident understanding of an ethics of deconstruction and an ethics of sexual difference as silent, unnameable refusal, circumscribing a shifting terrain for the articulation of an ethical relation that is respectful of the irreducibility of sexual difference as ground of the un–thought.

Fors dismantles a dominant psychoanalytic binary in Abraham and Torok’s crypto–nomic work, in relation to introjection (normal mourning) and incorporation (pathological or abnormal mourning). Derrida suggests paradoxical associations exist between the two, a complication that demonstrates the deconstruction of an inside and outside coupling via notions and elements that deal with the foreign and mimesis, two versions of self–and–other relations structured by death. Psychoanalytic introjection constitutes a love for the other in me. Incorporation keeps the other as a foreign body within my own body. Abraham and Torok, and psychoanalysis generally, consider that successful mourning operates at the level of introjection of the other. Incorporation, keeping a separate other person inside the self, is seen as an abnormal response to mourning and turns to a pathological condition. Derrida seeks to dismantle the rigidity of the binary, suggesting another reading where incorporation could in fact lead to a more respectful position that maintains alterity of the other as an ethics of mourning, an ethics of the ghost structured or partitioned in and from me by the crypt. What is maintained is a difference and heterogeneity. Introjection could be seen as an act of assimilation and consummation of the other, another kind of “repetitive” death cycle, a refusal of the alterity and radical difference of the other. And this, for Derrida, implies an act of duplicity with respect to the other. With incorporation, the otherness of the other encounters the doubling of a “duplicity” that installs not the other as lost object,
but the crypt of the other within my unconscious, within “my” heart–of–hearts: “Incorporation keeps still, speaks only to silence or to ward off intruders from its secret place” (Fors xvii). Hence Derrida’s own silence here on any overlay of his ghost work onto the crypt of Abraham and Torok: “What the crypt commemorates, as the incorporated object’s ‘monument’ or ‘tomb,’ is not the object itself, but its exclusion, the exclusion of a specific desire from the introjection process” (xvii). Thus a kind of mimicry or duplicity is inherent in a new concept of incorporation as cryptic:

With the real loss of the object having been rejected and the desire having been maintained but at the same time excluded from introjection (simultaneous conservation and suppression, between which no synthesis is possible), incorporation is a kind of theft to appropriate the pleasure object. But that reappropriation is simultaneously rejected: which leads to the paradox of a foreign body preserved as foreign but by the same token excluded from a self that thenceforth deals not with the other; but only with itself. The more the self keeps the foreign element as a foreigner inside itself, the more it excludes it. The self mimes introjection. (xvii)

A contradictory law of desire operates what Fors describes as “parietal partitions,” where incorporation is discovered to mimic the self–same tendencies of introjection. Parietal names this cryptic enclave built through a desire to save the foreign body as foreign by a self who wishes not to acknowledge its foreignness, a result of incorporation’s mimesis of introjection (or false unconscious). At stake is what can never be known save for the desire for not knowing the other, as desire’s contradictory law would have it. Nothing can be known here and this is the unbearable site of trauma (the source) that produces the utterance in a language saved for reading anasemically. When deconstructed, it acknowledges trauma as pre–original, before knowing and beyond signification, as site and encounter of the Thing as foreign body, as the ghost’s unconscious, a thing that is both nothing and substantial, forceful and materialized. This encounter is related to a positioning on the topography and tropography of the crypt as that space produced by and of a “false unconscious” of the divided self fundamentally distinct from the Conscious and Unconscious common to the order of psychoanalysis:

Ghost effects and crypt effects (of incorporation) were discovered nearly simultaneously, in the same problematic space and the same conceptual articulations: What is in question in a secret, a tomb and a burial, but that the crypt from which the ghost comes back belongs to someone else. One could call this a heterocryptography. This heterocryptography calls for a completely different way of listening from that appropriate to the cryptic incorporation.
Derrida’s question of the secret tomb and burial, which we read here as a question of ethics as refusal and as a feminine operation, takes form from this crypt’s effect as a spatio–temporal interrogation of philosophy, on the first principle of philosophy itself since it began in a form of questioning that requisitioned an origin: “what, originally, is a Thing?” (xiii): “In place of another here the first word is—crypt. Then it won’t have been, in principle, the first. It won’t have taken place as such. Its rightful place is the other’s. The crypt keeps an undiscoverable place, with reason” (xii). Introjection legitimizes the patrimonial legacy in the name, memorializes in me the credit and credentials of my inheritances. Incorporation hides as it holds, keeps safe from and for what will be secreted without name, without remains. Yet, introjection and incorporation, in mourning, are both impediments when it comes to the otherness of the other. Responsibility to the other is acknowledging incorporation’s refusal as respect.3 Hence our need to foreground the foreign elements in Fors to reveal their focus on dysfunctions and aberrations, on the limits to orthodox approaches to communicability, translatability, interpretation, and meaning. This acknowledgement by deconstruction is not to escape the metaphysical concepts that reside in its languages but rather to expose and displace what those languages do not know they say, what can never be present to itself, to undermine their naturalized hierarchies, which they are unable to acknowledge themselves, what they cannot speak.

The cryptic place is also a sepulchre in which the Self houses its dead as dead, a thing kept alive, that goes on living as dead (Derrida, Fors xxi). This act of preservation is what Derrida names a “nostalgic vocation.” That “all incorporation has introjection as its nostalgic vocation” alludes to the contradictory relation between introjection and incorporation as a relay, or simulacrum, an appropriation that keeps alive the complex relations between Self and Other, conscious and unconscious, facilitated by the otherness of the other that rests on a desire to save and exclude at the same moment (118n13). Derrida notes with respect to The Magic Word:

The only occurrence of the word safe [for] is in this chapter [Chapter 7, “The Turning Point: A Truthful Witness”] where we see sketched out, insofar as it is read with another kind of analytic attention and an anasemic vigilance, the whole politico–judicial scope of this “case.” To save, then, not the Wolf Man (he was born Christmas Day, 1886, and has just
signed his memoirs) but his analysis. Plus two analysts: not Freud and Ruth Mack Brunswick but the co-signers of *The Magic Word*: ‘An irresistible force pulls us: to save the analysis of the Wolf Man, to save ourselves.’ […] The two analysts constructed: the analysis of a crypt, of course, of a cryptography, with its own language and its methods; but also, inseparably, the crypt of analysis, its “decrypted” (deciphered) crypt, its crypt in the act of decrypting, the commemorative monument of what must be kept alive and seminally active. […] In saving itself, the force of their double desire is no less part of the scene. It is part of what is shown there and part of what, as is always the case with force, escapes representation. (xxiii–xxv)

This is a much–encrypted *economy* of double desire of crypt building and decrypting. Its programmes and practices, foreign to itself, produce an irresistible force to save the analysis. Its kernel does not resemble any traditional psychoanalytic programme or literary analysis, yet explicitly references: “Freud, Ferenczi, K. Abraham, Hermann, Klein, poets from France, England and Hungary, etc.” (xxv). The Thing, as the original trauma of analysis itself, constitutes a foreign texture, weave, interlacement, a maze of cryptonymic effects in the multitude of languages that make up its scenes of translation. The authors’ dissatisfaction leads to a refusal of the existing “catalogue of deciphered hieroglyphics” (xxv). This is the very moment of the crypt’s genesis, of its embedded history whose laws are governed by the historically coded data that is, in turn, re–coded, rearranged, and reassembled into an inventive reconstituted hieroglyphic code. This is a history that is more than one, and also a “history” as story—novel, drama, poem, myth, and translation. Why all these forms? We are definitely now at the side of a burial site, witness to the burying of evidence, of the original trauma, the Thing, by the fictive agency. This gathering around the site of mourning gathers together the threads of our analysis in relation to the effects of truth across the overlapping borders of appropriation, the fictive, testimony, and translation. These conditions of effects of truth, structured by the crypt and not within it, help to bury the Thing in the Unconscious: history itself as an incomplete drama, the old generations and their living dead corpus, what Abraham and Torok name the transphenomenal approach.

The transphenomenal approach converts a traditional psycho–analysis, through its assemblage of other disciplines, such as phenomenology and literature, alongside its point of departure from them. What is at stake here is that the transphenomenal buries the Thing through its fictive mode of building and this building marks the structure of the crypt. The original event of trauma never appears as itself, only as a reconstituted form: “reconstituted by a novelistic, mytho–dramatico–poetic genesis” (*Fors* xxvi). The approach that *Fors* takes to the analysis of the transphenomenal
alludes to the impossibility of truth without fiction or, to put it another way, in the relations between self and language, truth resides in all genres as forms of a self’s otherness. The structure of the transphenomenal approach and the disappearance of the original event are constitutive of this self that is never present to itself. This crypt, built from a translation of the “established” text, Freud’s “The History of an Infantile Neurosis,” into an “invented” text, The Wolf Man’s Magic Word, performs the site of the transphenomenon, which marks the difference between the texts as a mode of fiction and as translation: “The original [“established” text] is only an asymptotic place of ‘convergences’ among all the possible translations and betrayals. […] To be constrained by a certain internal logic in the original still remains the rule of translation, even if that original is itself constructed, by the structure of the ‘original’ event, as a ‘cryptomythic’ system” (xxvi–xxvii).

This is an approach that is rigorous in its questioning around procedures for a new topographical definition of “The Thing,” “Reality,” and “Fantasy.” The transphenomenal’s internal contradiction lies in the desire for the truth of the original event that is itself constituted and constructed through the cryptonymic effects of translation but, paradoxically, a translation that sees the necessity of fidelity to an “original” as source–effect of the cryptonomic operation itself. Their textual enterprise acknowledges an internal necessity within the translation effect in accounting for the original, an acknowledgement that Fors suggests “[leaves] no freedom for reordering the story or for tampering with the internal necessity of the translations” (Fors xxvii). Hence the restrictions that, on the one hand, contain rigor in method and, on the other, refuse to acknowledge the other. Translation, as convergences and betrayals, is the basis for this procedure and, within their radical interpretative invention, what cannot be contained or ignored would be the possibility for an–other order or mode of story. Tampering—contaminations of the other—is the very possibility of the transphenomenal ceded from the old generations of psychoanalysis, phenomenology, and literature: “a certain foreign body is here working over our household words” (xxv).

We are getting to the heart of things, to the crypt’s inner safe with the foreignness of this foreigner. On the one hand, we recognize in Fors that this foreign body belongs to the conventions of psychoanalytic discourse, its laws of translation, interpretation, decipherment, inventing its own language, not housed within a reading program that would be termed phenomenological and hermeneutic or that would find a capacity to discover based on a reassuring tracing back to origins. Yet, on the other hand, this foreign body of anasemic analysis and invention belongs to sexual difference as that case (crypt) of an encrypted discourse characterized by desire, trauma, artifice, and a partitioning effect. Belonging, as such, is a unity built by the crypt, by
partitioning violence. The foreignness of the foreign is origin of a difference that cannot present itself, a thing encrypted by the crypt and in the unconscious and thus grasped only through language and by the very source from which language emanates. Through this logic, understood by Abraham and Torok as intra–psychic forces of desire, we find the locale of our foreign body or textual enterprise as that economy that suggests sexual difference does not exist save for its trace structures as the source of languages and their inventions, foreign to any conventional discourses of sexual difference and their translatability, cryptic structure of the ultimate referent, from which springs necessity as such. The “established” text of sexual difference transforms into an “invented” one, whereby the original is only an anasemic possibility of translations and betrayals, where deferred action is the fiction that covers over what can never be recovered—the trauma of sexual difference—but is re–covered all the same—artifice as otherness, silently surviving. This paradox of a no–place marked by a deferral of sexual difference at the same time reveals the fantasy or fictive origins and inventions of its languages. We would want to think this mytho–poesis, along with Abraham and Torok, within the vaulted, canopied, and condemned sites brought to being across an anasemic and deconstructive textuality—sites prepared by what we will term or come to recognize as archaic language, languages of the revenant–arrivant, silently refusing inherited names, resisting our dead fathers, as if we were their own.

The ghost or foreigner encrypted between partitions and walled surfaces of the incorporating or introjecting process is epitomized by the elliptical triad of Fors with le for intérieur, “innermost heart” or “conscience”; le for extérieur, “temporal” or “outward” jurisdiction, installing controversy at the level of plurality to reveal the contradictory forces of the inside–outside topography; and fors plural, translated here as “save,” “except for,” “outside of” (Rand lxviii). We coincide this secret third moment as an ethical site of resistance for keeping alive the otherness of the other as the truly foreign ghost, “an undiscoverable place” (Fors xii). Derrida refers to a “blank stone” that he places on the edge of the crypt as an “ethical stone” (xiii). He writes at the beginning of the foreword, before he starts his tactics of displacement on Abraham and Torok’s cryptonymy: “I’ll stop here, already (vault to a stop), setting down on the edge of the crypt the little blank stone of a scruple, a voiceless word for thought alone, on the sole path, in order to engage others to it, of a crypt” (xiii). The quote contains within it a note on his tactics of displacement that involves three conditions: ethics, unthought thought (thought alone that does not desire decipherment), and the face–to–face acknowledgement of such unconditional thought for a future–to–come. This gesture resonates through the text of Fors as the keystone of an ethics at stake within our
responsibility toward the other as site of resistance in the acknowledgement of them as other, neither able to be assimilated nor excluded.

This is the moment of ethical disclosure in the text that acknowledges, on behalf of the book, the ancestral ghosts that are saved in order to construct Abraham and Torok’s topographical strategy. In the same moment, Derrida acknowledges their otherness as the offering of a textual strategy that is pocketed deep within his own deconstructive enterprise, coinciding with the forces of language in relation to the meaning of its being:

And yet the strange foreignness [that marks the semantic transformation of psychoanalysis foreign to phenomenology] inhabits the same words, disguises itself in the same language and in the same discursive system. Whence the question asked in “The Shell and the Kernel”: “It is within this hiatus, within this non–presence of the self to itself, the very condition of reflexivity, that the phenomenologist is standing without knowing it, to scrutinize, from the point of view of this terra incognita, his only visible horizon, that of the inhabited continents. Whereas the domain of psychoanalysis is situated precisely on that “ground of not–thought” [impense] of phenomenology. (Fors xxxii)

The discoursing ghosts—phenomenology, psychoanalysis, literature—in forgetting the forgetting of their legacies but also in their spectral returns, dividends, and profits, their credit lines and infinite reserves, become the cryptic enclave for deconstruction’s strategic move on the old inherited concepts, archaic languages, and on the otherness within them that is forgotten: “To grasp through language the very source from which language emanates” (xxxii). This un–thought thought or non–presence of a self to itself, this “ground of not–thought” that forgets its forgetting, hides as it holds the living dead as credit lines from our dead fathers and as archaic languages from our living mothers, hides a forgetting that Derrida has thought, elsewhere, as Nietzsche’s umbrella: his canopy–crypt, his bridal chamber and stiletto–spur.4

The proximities belonging to the crypt’s parietal partitions open this “ground of not–thought” of sexual difference—the “almost unimaginable” and impossibly hidden inner safe—to the other, to the “yet able–to–be–thought.” From Points. . . Interviews, from where we began, Derrida invokes “the funeral dais or the bridal canopy with the bride or fiancée the day of her wedding which is, for me, Genet’s or Hegel’s mother, as if these two [Hegel and Genet] were my bastards” (“Ja” 51). She, his bride, would have called herself, in secret, Marie–Gabrielle Derrida. Hegel and Genet, his bastard sons, would have had this unknown woman as their mother. Dais
de l’œil révulsé, our title, though cited and discussed in Points. . Interviews, has a faux–bond, a strangulated binding with Glas. The dais, canopy, is also a wedding band, binding Hegel’s mother, Marie, and Genet’s mother, Gabrielle—his secret without remains, the cryptic enclave of a safe–keeping foreign to even him. We have already nominated his grandfathers, F–H; now his sons H–G, and their secreted, crypt of a mother M–G, with their patronyms and border–lines to survival, to living on, their doubles and double economies, incorporations and introjections, foreignness and mimesis, false unconscious and heterocryptographies. Derrida suggests Glas is a work on the work of mourning, a speculating on an end of mourning–work which would not be the “normal” completion of mourning, but something like a “beyond the mourning principle” which, he suggests, is “almost unimaginable” (“Ja” 52).

This “almost unimaginable” has the rigor of a work of exclusion: “even if it is unthinkable, it/id lends at least a contour to the able–to–be–thought” (“Ja” 52). Fors traces the line of this contour through the relays of Abraham and Torok’s displacements of psychoanalysis. Derrida’s deconstruction of the binary of introjection and incorporation cannot be thought apart from his understanding of the feminine after Nietzsche and ethics after Levinas. Two more: N–L (he would, in fact, play with him as elle). They, all of them, would be Nietzsche’s feminine operation, all these twos. Derrida’s crypt commences with the blank stone of the other. His ghosts, revenants and arrivants, their patronomies, are founded in their living–on, in their almost unimaginable sexual differences, beyond the mourning principle. Yet, in a silent refusal to acknowledge, that is the ethics of a crypt’s incorporation, in the safe–keeping that saves the thing within us but, essentially, from us, in this mimesis of introjection that is the crypt’s economy of the secret, sexual difference will not have been our question and, not taking any chances, we will have simply said we love them still.

NOTES
1/ Derrida is here replying to Eugenio Donato in the “Roundtable on Autobiography.” Donato is clarifying a certain deconstructive path in relation to a third logic as Derrida’s crypt. The “Roundtable” follows on from Derrida’s paper “Oto biographies: The Teaching of Nietzsche and the Politics of the Proper Name” in The Ear of the Other (54–59).
4/ The reference to Nietzsche and forgetting is found in Derrida’s *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles*. In a text that places particular emphasis on Heidegger’s engagement with Nietzsche in relation to Heidegger’s understanding of the forgetting of Being and Nietzsche’s writing on women, Derrida, somewhat playfully, draws on a brief marginal note by Nietzsche: “I have forgotten my umbrella.”

WORKS CITED


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