

Hospitality – the *Pulse and the Pulsation* of Deconstruction

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Abstract

With the title “Hospitality – the *Pulse and the Pulsation* of Deconstruction,” this article tries to present and to highlight Derrida’s Deconstruction as a philosophical idiom, trying to emphasise its singularity – its singularity as an idiom of philosophical thought as well as the singularity of its thought of hospitality, advocating it as the bearer of Lights for the urgency of a new “world” of Enlightenment to come.

Keywords

Derrida, deconstruction, hospitality, justice, idiom

“Everything begins with welcoming”
(J. Derrida 2022, 70)

“I try to think the possibility of the impossibility”
(J. Derrida 2012a, 196)

As part of the admirative and studious fidelity of this “in memoriam” to Jacques Derrida, dedicated to the person, the thought and the work of Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), which the University of Pécs has been organising, for years already, under the attentive and wise supervision of Professor Jolán Orbán – whom I would like to warmly salute, thank and wholeheartedly congratulate for this touching and (philosophically) important initiative – I would like to begin today by noting and presenting Derrida’s Deconstruction as a *philosophical idiom*, as a *philosophical idiom of thought*, trying to emphasise its *singularity* – its *singularity* as a *philosophical idiom of thought* as well as the *singularity* of its *thought on the subject of hospitality* and of its implications on the *subjective*, the *juridical* and the *political* as, in this year’s “in memoriam”, we will be *above*

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all focusing on *Hospitalité* (Paris: ed. du Seuil, 2022), the second volume of Jacques Derrida's 1996–1997 *Seminar*², which has just been published and which, above all, gives us Derrida reading, re-thinking and *counter-signing* Levinas.

Emmanuel Levinas (1906–1995) was described by Derrida as a “great thinker of hospitality” (Derrida 2022, 21) – or more precisely, as a thinker of “*l'éthicité de l'éthique*” (Derrida and Labarrière 1986, 70) [“the ethicity of ethics”] and as a thinker of the *ethics of hospitality*, indeed of ethics *as* hospitality (Derrida 2022, 22–25), whose arch-originality he describes as able *to deduce* – it is, in fact, his own word: *déduire* [to deduce] (Levinas 1991, 239. My emphasis) – a *law* and a *politics of hospitality* (Derrida 2022, 24–25). In doing so, he audaciously thought and allowed us to think about “the law beyond the law” and “the politics beyond the politics” (Derrida 1996a, 76) designed and conceived to extend beyond the strict sovereignty of the nation-state, thereby proposing a re-elaboration of the singular relationship between ethics (in the guise of *meta-* or *hyper-*ethics), law and politics. A proposal that signals the “extravagant hypothesis” (Abensour 1998, 55–84) of Emmanuel Levinas, in the pertinent words of Miguel Abensour – a hypothesis *in a certain way* also shared by Jacques Derrida, by the *indeconstructibility* of his Deconstruction as a *philosophical thought: indeconstructibility* drawing, let us remember, upon the hyperbolism (see Derrida 1996b, 82) of its *meta-onto-phenomeno-logical*, *meta-anthro-onto-logical* and *meta-onto-theo-logical* register as *thought* – the register of the *impossibility* or the *unconditionality* that breaks with the onto-phenomeno-logical themes of the waiting *horizon*³ and of the *als Struktur* that *re-thinks* the traditional and dominant onto-phenomeno-logical register of philosophy in *aporetic* terms. This *aporeticity* embodies the very difficulty of Deconstruction – accustomed, as we generally are, to the comfort of ideas and theories, this *aporeticity* is at the heart of the difficulty of understanding Deconstruction as a *philosophical thought: a philosophical thought* that marks, along with the primacy and the excess of *unconditionality or impossibility*, the distinction between *unconditionality* and *conditionality or sovereignty*, as well as their relationship and the *hiatus* that feeds both their relationship and their distinction. *Hiatus* marks the *interruption* in which attention to otherness breathes – attention to otherness, i.e., to the other as other or to what happens, to the event of arrival

² Jacques Derrida's seminar on hospitality took place from 1995 to 1997 at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS) in Paris, as part of a series of seminars under the general title of “Questions de la Responsabilité”, which began in 1991 and was interrupted in 2003.

³ “I am also [with Levinas] in favour of suspending the horizon but, precisely for this reason, in saying this, I am no longer a phenomenologist. [...] when I accept the necessity of suspending the horizon, I am no longer a phenomenologist” (Derrida 2012a, 202).

[*arrivance*]. *Hiatus* is the sign of “à-venir” [“to-come”]. Let us just remember that, in *Circonfession* (1991), Derrida says that it is the task of Deconstruction “to make the interruption readable” (Derrida 1991, 53) and, in *La Conférence de Heidelberg* (1988), Derrida says that *interruption* is the very condition of the relationship to the other *as other* (2014a, 90–91).

I must confess that this is my preliminary goal and a task that I consider most fundamental and of the utmost urgency – because philosophy is always linked to an idiom – namely the task of thinking about and presenting Deconstruction as a *philosophical idiom* linked to the name, the thought and the work of Jacques Derrida: and all this without thereby reifying Deconstruction in a theory (i.e., in a theoretical-systematic philosophy). It is important also to bear in mind that, building on the work of Kant and Heidegger, but in a very different way, Derrida not only distinguishes between *thought* and *philosophy* (Derrida and Roudinesco 2001, 200) – (*philosophy* always being connected with “the” *logocentric metaphysics* of the presence and of anthropocentric subjectivity, and *thought* being always thought as a *pass-act-ivity experience* of the event and as event) – but also reminds us that *thought*, and therefore the thinker-philosopher, is always, i.e., *every time*, in every *here-and-now* (Derrida 1997a, 29), under the blow of time and then at the *limit and/or threshold*. On the very abyss of the threshold and alone⁴. Without *pathos*, the (*a-subjective*) *singularity* is always combined, by Derrida, with *separation*, *secrecy* and *solitude* – a certain kind of *solitude*. *The solitude* of finitude – of uniqueness or of the creaturely condition. Hence the *auto-bio-graphic*, or more precisely the *auto-bio-thanato-betero-graphic*, and the *messianic* or *prophetic* (Derrida 1997a, 26; *prophético-poétique/prophét(h)ique*) register of the thoughtful and performative writing. Hence also the courage of *thought* – of *this thought of time* (*fois, vicis*) or of the *event, of that which happens* – always on the threshold of resistance and of re-invention.

An *idiom* with a *meta-onto-logic*, *meta-phenomeno-logic*, *meta-anthropo-logic* and *meta-onto-theo-logic* profile, endowed with specific (theoretical) presuppositions which, in the tradition of Plato’s “*hyperbolè... epekeina tes onsias*” and, above all, in the one of “*en diaphéron héautō*” (the “one differing in itself”) of Heraclitus, sketches out Jacques Derrida’s avowed taste for the “hyperbolism” that dictates, magnetises

⁴On the threshold, on the abyss of the threshold or on the threshold as abyss, where the heir-philosopher – just like the “I” – at every moment, and under the impact of the moment, must stand, “I am alone”, an “I” is always alone, that is to say, absolved, *absolutus*, detached, and therefore, in the world as in the history of philosophy, there is only “more than one alone”: solitude, a certain solitude, is the condition of the singularity, even the uniqueness, of each and every one. It should also be noted that for Derrida the threshold does not take the form of the ground, the solid, the founding solidity, the foundation – drawing the line beyond the ontological or phenomenological register, the threshold always has the appearance of an abyss: “The abyss is not the bottom, the original foundation (*Urgrund*), of course, nor the bottomless depth (*Ungrund*) of some hidden bottom. The abyss, if there is one, is that there is more than one ground, more than one solid, and more than one threshold”. “Plus d’un seul seul”, “(No)More than one alone” (Derrida 2008, 443).

and gives rhythm to his *thought* – those of *différance* designated by the *quasi-names* of *messianic* or *messianicity* and *kebôra*, this “totally indifferent space” “that creates a place for the taking place” (2012a, 203), in the philosopher’s words.

“Historical” *quasi-names*, necessarily, as Derrida points it out in *Foi et Savoir* (2000), beyond signalling the messianic untimeliness of time, also point to the dissociation between now [*maintenant*] and the present [*présent*], thus directing our attention to the disjunction of the instant, of each instant, and also *the very duplicity of the origin* – (Derrida 2000, 30; 1993a; 1993b; 1994). This *duplicity* signals in turn either *the origin in deconstruction* (Derrida 1967, 90) or the technicality and metaphoricity from the origin, either the *double source* or the double affiliation (Greek-Abrahamic) of western civilisation (Derrida 1992a, 267). Each of them is also double in itself, that is, each is non-identical to itself:

Philosophy has never been the responsible deployment of a single original assignment linked to a single language or to the place of a single people. Philosophy does not have a single memory. Under its Greek name and in its European memory, it has always been bastard, hybrid, grafted, multilinear, polyglot, and we must adjust our practice of the history of philosophy, of history and of philosophy to this reality, which was also a *chance* and remains more than ever a *chance*. (Derrida 1997b, 33)

This is a *double filiation* which, as Derrida says in *L’animal que donc je suis* (Derrida 2006, 69), although weaving together two narratives of heterogeneous status and origin, draws two symptomatic translations of the living together in the world.

And it is precisely from this *hyperbological*⁵, signalled by the indeconstructibility of this *meta-* (*meta-onto-logic*, *meta-phenomeno-logic*, *meta-anthropo-logic* and *meta-onto-theo-logic*) register of *thought*, that all *the impossibles* or all *the unconditionals* spring up – or it is this *hyperbological* that dictates and drafts all *the impossibles* or all *the unconditionals* of Derridean Deconstruction in its condition of *impossible thought* or *impossible experience of the impossible* (Derrida 1987, 27) barely *im-possible*: i.e., justice, pardon, responsibility, decision, blessing, democracy to-come, translation, gift, death, hospitality, ... the *gift of hospitality*, precisely, thought as a *tending towards* (*tendere*, *Greek teinô*) – (see Derrida 2022, 145), as a careful attention, an openness (*heterological* or *heteronomic* openness⁶) and *ex-position* to the other, to the unexpected and surprising

⁵ The *hyperbological* is the conjugation of the *law of paradox*, cf. (Derrida 1987, 595).

⁶ “Heteronomy is”, as Derrida notes it, “visitation before reception” (Derrida 2022, 157).

visitation of the other *whoever or whatever he or she may be*, since, for Derrida, “*tout autre est tout autre*” [“every other is absolutely other”].⁷

Anarchic, unconditional and hyperbolic, *hospitality* is then the welcoming attention to what happens for or to the other, to the very other [*tout autre*], in its condition, not of a guest, but of an unpredictable *visitor* (Derrida 1987, 53), of an *absolute arrival* – and as such, as the *unconditional welcoming* of the other, *hospitality* configures what Derrida calls (with capitals) *the Law* of hospitality. Of *unconditional hospitality*! And such *hospitality* – which Derrida will call pure, absolute, unconditional, just, poetic/po-ethical, messianic, and, in the lexicon of Lévinas, infinite (see Derrida 2022, 184), or even of *visitation*⁸ – and such *hospitality*, as I was saying, not only configures the structure of the subjectivity of the subject but also configures, as gesture or as attitude, Deconstruction itself in its condition of *thought of différance* or of *absolute otherness* (Derrida 2012b, 26), outlining at the same time both the hyper-ethical⁹ and the hyper-just register (as well as the [already] hyper-political¹⁰ register) that dictates and magnetises its “*pas au-delà*” (cf. *Parages*, 1986): trace of the untimely surprise of the *impossible*, or of the other *as other*, as the very condition of the possible, this register is, in a saying of Derrida from *Papier Machine* (2001), “the drive or the pulse” (see Derrida 2001, 308) of Deconstruction itself – *the drive or the pulse*, i.e., the breathing, the life, the *over-life* [*sur-vie*] of Deconstruction. A *sur-vie* that, beyond the *auto-bio-thanato-hetero-graphic* register, stresses both the *hyperbologic* and the *rhythmotypy* that magnetises it and traces its *loco-comotion* (Derrida and Malabou 1999, 40, 42) drawing its attention to the blow of the moment – always “out of joint” –, and so its vocation to resistance, to dissidence and to re-invention. Hence Derrida’s confessing *to have always dreamt of resistance* – (see Derrida 1996b, 39) and *to have lived his death in writing*: “If I had invented my writing,” he says in *Apprendre à vivre enfin* (2005), “I would have done it like an endless revolution.” (Derrida 2005).

In fact, in distinguishing *thought* from *philosophy*, there is in the *thought* and in the work of Jacques Derrida an equation of *thought*, of the *courageous and intransigent unconditionality* of *thought* either with *ethics* – however understood, not as an area or as

⁷ “*Tout autre est tout autre*” [...] he first fell, dare I say it, like a stone in Lévinas’s garden...” (Derrida and Malabou 1999, 263).

⁸ Following his distinction of the *face* from the *phenomenon*, Lévinas says that «the epiphany of the face is *visitation*» (Lévinas 1988b, 194).

⁹ “[...] beyond law, debt and duty, it would be necessary to think rationally a hyper-ethics or a hyper-politics that doesn’t just act ‘in accordance with duty (*pflichtmässig*)’ or even [...] ‘for pure duty’ [...]. This hyper-ethics or this hyper-politics goes unconditionally beyond the economic circle of duty or of the task [...] of the debt to reappropriate or to cancel!” (Derrida 2003b, 210).

¹⁰ “The thought of politics has always been a thought of *différance*, and the thought of *différance* has also always been a thought of politics, of the contours and of the limits of politics” (2003b, 64).

a speciality of the philosophical *corpus*, but, because of its meta-ontology, in terms of *hyper-ethics* or of “hyperbolic ethics”: “the ‘hyperbolic ethic’ [is] an ethic above ethics” (Derrida 2012c, 35) – with *justice* (see Derrida 2004, 48) – and with *hospitality*. The thought of *différance* is a *thought of justice* and a *thought of hospitality*, as *hospitality* and as *justice* and, in its intransigent *unconditionality*, *hospitality* is *ethics* itself. What we can also understand as being the ethical, the *hyper-ethical* scope of *thought* itself – or that should inspire the demanding probity of thinking in all areas of knowledge, arts and technologies. A relevant passage in *Cosmopolites de tous les pays, encore un effort!* (1996) emphasises this (hyper-)ethical scope of the *unconditionality of thought*, of *this thought* – “[...] the end of morality (that was the greatest naivety)” (Derrida 1983, 59–60), as much as of *culture*, of the culture of cultures and of *hospitality* itself:

To cultivate the ethics of hospitality – isn’t this language moreover tautological? Despite all the perversions that threaten it, we don’t even have to cultivate an ethics of hospitality. Hospitality is culture itself, and it is not an ethics among others. Insofar as it touches on *ethos*, i.e. the dwelling, the home, the familiar place to stay as much as the way of being there, the way of relating to oneself and to others, to others as one’s own or as strangers, *ethics is hospitality*, it is in every way co-extensive with the experience of hospitality, however we open it up or limit it. (Derrida 1997c, 41–42)

Let us emphasise it: it is not only in relation to *justice* (see Bernardo 2021), to the *unconditionality of justice* (in the sense distinct from law [legal system, juridico-political devices] and thought, in a certain trace of Levinas [Cf. Derrida 2017, 79], in terms of *an absolute relation to the absolutely other*, i.e., *to the other as other*, *separated or secret*), that Jacques Derrida has understood as defining Deconstruction – “*Deconstruction is justice*” [Derrida 1994, 35], he said in *Force de loi* (1994) in the context of a colloquium with American jurists from Cardozo Law School, linking his work with Critical Legal Theory in the United States. He does exactly the same with the motif of *hospitality* – *hospitality* which, moreover, he holds to be inseparable from a *thought of justice* and which he thinks originally as a *gift* (and not as a *duty*¹¹ or a *right* – a *gift* which, moreover, *gives what it does not have* (Derrida 2012a, 195). In *Hospitality II*, Derrida very explicitly announces *hospitality* as a *name* and/or as an *exemplary experience* of Deconstruction itself: as a questioning of the *proper* [*propre*], of the *same*, of the *one*, of the *home* [*chez-soi*], of the *oikos*, of *ownership*, of *appropriation*, of “*presence to*

¹¹ “[...] pure ethics begins beyond law, beyond duty and debt. [...] It is therefore necessary to do duty beyond duty, to have to go beyond law, tolerance, conditional hospitality, economy, etc.”, [Derrida and Habermas 2003, 193].

oneself”, in short, of *oikonomy* and of *ipséity* or *cratic sovereignty* (i.e., one and indivisible), so central in *logocentric metaphysics*. *Hospitality* is a *name* and/or an *exemplary experience* of Deconstruction itself (as an *impossible thought of the impossible*). Let us listen to him – it is in the fifth session of the seminar, the one dated 8 January 1997:

[...] hospitality, the experience, the apprehension, the exercise of impossible hospitality, of hospitality as the possibility of the impossible [...] is the exemplary experience of deconstruction itself, when it is or does what it has to do and to be, that is to say, the experience of the impossible. *Hospitality is a name or an example of deconstruction*. [...] Hospitality is the deconstruction of home [*chez soi*], deconstruction is the hospitality to the other, to the other than oneself, to the other of “one’s other”, to an other who is beyond all “one’s other” (Derrida 2022, 152).

I emphasise – “*Hospitality is a name or an example of deconstruction*”. And I emphasise it in order to point out that the “beautiful rainbow of hospitality”, as Edmond Jabès calls it, this major sign of humanity, of culture and of civilisation – “Civilisation was born with hospitality” (de Villepin 2016, 564) – as much as of risk, of danger and of promise of re-invention and of “future” [*avenir*] – not only outline the singularity of the *meta-onto-phenomeno-logical* silhouette of Deconstruction in its condition of *thought*, of *thought of the différance*, of *the trace or of the absolute otherness* – by outlining the opening to the other and/or to the to-come [*à-venir*]¹² – but also draws the profile, that is, and in the Levinasian lexicon, the very *uncondition* of the *subjectivity of the subject* or, in the Derridean lexicon, of the *a-subjective* or *différente singularity* (Derrida 1992b, 277): in fact, *already always* under the elective call of an *ab-solu* (*ab-solus*) other, held to be the “*first comer*” or “the unplanned, unforeseeable, unpredictable, unexpected visitor” (Derrida 2022, 184). In his “*pass-act-ivité*” (see Derrida 2009, 58), the “subject”, always late, always arriving late, and therefore always subject, is for Derrida, in an echo of Levinas’s “subjectivity-substitution” (see Derrida 2022, 199), *arch-originary* and *unconditionally a guest*¹³ – or rather a *host-hostage*¹⁴ of the other in the terminology of *Totalité et Infini* (1961) and in that of *Autrement qu’être ou au-delà de l’essence*: “The self

¹² In “Abraham, l’autre”, Derrida speaks of thinking or of writing as “a hospitality to the event and to the arrival of the arriving (a messianicity without messianism), that is to say, to the to-come. The to-come, that is to say, the other” (Derrida 2003a, 41).

¹³ Recalling that the question of translation is intimately linked to that of hospitality, Derrida will point out that, in his idiom, the word *host* means both the *invited*, received or welcomed *guest* and the *inviting host*, the one who receives or welcomes.

¹⁴ “The subject is a guest” (Lévinas 1961, 334), “the subject is hostage” – “[...] this hostage substitution – it is the subjectivity and the uniqueness of the subject” (Lévinas 1988a, 142, 158).

is hostage from top to bottom, more ancient than the Ego, before principles. [...] It is because of the hostage condition that there can be pity, compassion, forgiveness and closeness in the world. [...] The condition of hostage is not the limit case of solidarity, but the condition of all solidarity.” (Lévinas 1988a, 150)

Insistently, Derrida emphasises it: it is always already as *host*, always already *chez-soi-chez-l'autre* – and not as a proper or a master of oneself and of one’s house – that the “subject” welcomes the other in his or her condition of unexpected *visiting* [*guest*], of absolute arrival or, in the Levinasian lexicon, of “face” – “The epiphany of the face is visitation” (Lévinas 1972, 50; Derrida 2022, 80). In Levinas, “face” (the means of another’s *revelation*) always combines with “visit” and “visitation” (Lévinas 1972, 153). And because of this, it is always while harassed and marked by the other that the self identifies him- or herself in the context of an in-finite experience of non-identity with the self. In his reading of Levinas in *Hospitalité II*, Derrida notes it by emphasising the *anarchic uncondition* of the “ethical or welcoming subject” in its irreplaceability in terms of “hostage”: “Ipseity, in its passivity without the *arché* of identity, is hostage. The word *I* means *here I am*, answering for everything and everyone” (Lévinas 1988a, 145), – as “disappropriation” – (Derrida 2022, 179), as “de-substantiation” – (Lévinas 1988a, 163), as “one-for-the-other”, as “hostage-substitution” or even as “psychosis” – “Uniqueness, out of concept, psyche as a grain of madness” (Lévinas 1988a, 282)...: “The arrivant”, says Derrida in “Fidélité à plus d’un” (1998), “must be so surprising to me that I cannot even determine him as man/human. [...] *Hospitality opened to the newcomer without condition should open me to the newcomer, whoever he may be, but also to what we so easily call an animal or a god. Good or evil, life or death.*” (Derrida 1998, 247)

And, from the point of view of subjectivity, with the problem of hospitality, it is therefore the deconstruction of the egological or autonomic, anthropological, ontological, if not even ontotheological, register of sovereignty (of the one who gives hospitality as a master or as a lord) that is at stake and radically called into question: there is no *chez-soi /chez-soi* [“at home”] that is not always already “at home in other’s home” [*chez soi chez l'autre*]: “The guest becomes the host of the host” – “L’hôte (*guest*) devient l’hôte (*host*) de l’hôte (*host*)”, says Derrida in *De l’hospitalité* (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 1997, 111). “I is another” [*Je est un autre*], says Levinas, quoting Rimbaud and implicitly criticising the subject as defined in terms of consciousness, intentionality, *inter-esse*, freedom, will, power of decision, (autonomic) responsibility, uni-identity and presence-to-himself. A subject, an autonomic subject,

which Derrida says is nothing at all but a fable!¹⁵ Indeed, because of his finitude/creaturiality and his condition as “latecomer”, he only comes to himself through the other, the primacy of the other, the primacy of the language of *the* other to whom he has to respond – as *Le Monolinguisme de l'autre* puts it (see Derrida 1996b, 71) – and therefore in the scene of a *self-hetero-nomic experience* as a prosthetic being (*ab ovo*) – his appropriation (of himself or of the language of *the* other, of culture, etc.) is nothing but an *ex-appropriation*. A *grieving appropriation*.

Implicitly, this presupposes as much a critique of Kant’s *universal hospitality* – in which the host welcomes as master and lord of the place where he “gives” place – as of Levinas’s *hospitality of visitation*, confined as it is to the *human other* or to the *universal brother*: in fact, in Levinas, the other is always the *other man* – the other as human and the human as man [that is, in a scene of *anthropocentrism* and of *phallogentrism*, even if, as Derrida demonstrates in “Le mot d’accueil” – (see Derrida 1997d, 71–85) (and he was the only one to have done so!), there is also in Levinas an important *feminist hyperbole*] (see Bernardo 2023; Derrida 1997d, 83–85; 2018).

As Derrida says in the fifth session of *Hospitalité* (2022):

Hospitality must, should, if there is any, open itself up to an other who is not mine, my host, my other, not even my neighbour or my brother (Levinas always says that the other, the other man, man as other is my neighbour, my universal brother, in humanity, and this is basically one of our great questions: should hospitality be reserved, confined to man, to the universal brother? Because even if Levinas disassociates the idea of fraternity from the idea of “similar” and the idea of neighbour or of proximity from the idea of non-distance, non-remoteness, fusion or identity, he maintains that the hospitality of the host as well as that of the hostage must belong to the place of neighbourly fraternity); *hospitality, then, must, should, if there is any, be open to another who is not mine, my host, my other, not even my neighbour or my brother, perhaps an animal* (Derrida 2022, 149).

I underline – “*hospitality, then, must, should, if there is any, be open to another who is not mine, my host, my other, not even my neighbour or my brother, perhaps an animal*”: recalling that Derrida has “the question of the living and of the living animal” as “the great question”, as “the most decisive question” (Derrida 2006, 57)¹⁶ – it is in fact

¹⁵ “Le sujet est une fable”, “‘Il faut bien manger’ ou le calcul du sujet” in (Derrida, 1992b), 279. For the originally prosthetic register of subjectivity or identity, see also Derrida 1996a.

¹⁶ And the most decisive question of all, because it involves everything: the question of subjectivity or humanity, the question of life, death, name, response and responsibility, the question of the world and life in the world, the question of ethics, politics, technology, science, art, etc.

the question of the human himself and of all his manifestations – I underline in order to point out once again not only the *meta*-ontological and the *meta*-juridico-political register of the *unconditionality* of *hospitality* according to Derrida, but also the *meta*-onto-anthro-logical register of it, which questions and re-thinks the *sacrificial tradition* inherent to the *carno-phallo-logo-centrism* of the philosophical-cultural westernisation – *unconditional hospitality*, if there is any, and when there is, it must be the welcome of the other, of a “*tout autre*” who happens to be *anyone* [*n’importe qui*], *anyone at all* [*quiconque*], since, for Derrida, “*tout autre est tout autre*”: “Every other is absolutely other” being the corner-stone very explicitly addressed by Derrida (see Derrida and Malabou 1999, 263) to the humanistic *ethics of holiness*¹⁷ (but without hagiography) or of the *absolute otherness* of Emmanuel Levinas.

It is, let us also note it in passing, the *anthropocentrism* of traditional humanisms – including of the very demanding *meta*-ethical humanism of Emmanuel Lévinas (Lévinas 1988a, 164): *a humanism of the other man* (Derrida 1992b) – that is thus called into question: an *anthropocentrism* that since the biblical *Genesis* and the Aristotelian *zoon logon ekbhon* has been the scene of the cratic sovereignty, or of the mastery, of man over man/woman, over nature and over animals. The cratic sovereignty which is truly at the origin of the violence of *carno-phallogocentrism* and its rough *sacrificialist spirit*:

In any case, it is a question [for the *sacrificial* spirit or structure] of recognising a place left free, in the very structure of these discourses which are also “cultures”, for a non-criminal killing: with ingestion, incorporation or introjection of the corpse. A real operation, but also a symbolic one when the corpse is “animal” (and who are we to believe that our cultures are carnivorous because animal proteins are irreplaceable?), a symbolic operation when the corpse is “human”. (Derrida 1992b, 292–293)

It is a spirit that Derrida urges us to re-think and to fight in a tenacious pursuit of a *war for mercy*¹⁸, for *compassionate responsibility* towards life in general (and not only towards human life) for *the promise* of an *absolutely other* world of Enlightenment to come (see Derrida 2003b, 163).

¹⁷ For this question, “De l’utilité des insomnies” (Levinas 1994, 201).

¹⁸ “It is a war “between, on the one hand, those who violate not only animal life but even this feeling of compassion and, on the other hand, those who appeal to the irrefutable testimony of this pity. It is a war about pity” (Derrida 2006, 50).

Coda – re-thinking everything *tout autrement*

“[...] *il faut faire l'impossible...*”
(Derrida in Seffahi 1999, 141)

“*Ce qui m'a tout le temps préoccupé, c'est l'hétérogène*”
(Derrida and Ferraris 2018, 42)

As in an echo of Emmanuel Levinas's “extravagant hypothesis” (see Abensour 1998, 55–84), (although re-thought) concerning the origin of the State and its institutions – according to which, under the excellence of the “emphasis of exteriority” (see Lévinas 1988a, 231), i.e., of absolute otherness, society, law, the State and its institutions would derive from the “human intrigue” of (*meta-* or hyper-ethical) responsibility *for the other*¹⁹ which is the very scene of *unconditional hospitality* – Jacques Derrida will make of the *unconditional hospitality* to the untimeliness of the event or to the absolute singularity of the other (whoever he, she or it may be) a kind of “trans-political” and “trans-judicial” principle for *re-thinking* in new terms thought and the human self, citizenship, law, civil disobedience, human rights, politics, democracy and its institutions: in all truth, to *re-think* them anew and *tout autrement*. As the philosopher confesses to Michel Wieviorka in “Le siècle et le pardon” (1999), this welcoming attention, this careful attention, this *unconditional* hospitality engages a deconstructive critique of everything that binds the social, politics and justice to the sovereignist phantasm and implants a kind of new “foundation” for the social, the citizenship, the law, the politics and the democracy in the guise of a “democracy to come” – “I would turn this trans-political principle [that of the experience (in the patric sense) of absolute singularity] into a political principle, a rule or a political stance: in politics, we must also respect secrecy, what exceeds politics or what no longer becomes from de juridical. This is what I would call the ‘democracy to come’” (Derrida 2000, 129). In fact, a kind of new “foundation” for *re-thinking everything* anew and differently [*tout autrement*] – a “foundation” which, nevertheless, as Derrida observes in *Foi et Savoir* (2000), only provides a foundation by collapsing (see Derrida 2000, 32), by falling to pieces. An idea that Derrida reiterates, still in

¹⁹ “It is therefore not unimportant to know whether the egalitarian and just State in which man fulfils himself (and which it is a question of instituting and, above all, of maintaining) proceeds from a war of all against all or from the irreducible responsibility of one for all, and whether it can do without friendships and faces. It is not unimportant to know this in order war is not to be established as a war with a clear conscience.” (Lévinas 1988a, 203).

dialogue with Wieviorka, but this time in “Accueil, Éthique, Droit et Politique” (1999) – an idea that I would like to reiterate here, in conclusion, emphasising once again the social, the political and the juridical implications of the “*pas au-delà*” that feeds Deconstruction and that draws the *hyperbolicity* of its *meta-onto-phenomenological philosophical idiom*. As Derrida argues:

The question today is to know if hospitality comes from the politics and therefore from the State. “Civil disobedience” raises the question of knowing whether I have the right to act as an individual other than as a citizen: to invite anyone I want into my home, even if the law forbids it. When Kant says that hospitality must be universal, but on such and such a condition, he is talking about the hospitality of the citizen.

But shouldn’t hospitality, in the radical production of otherness, go beyond legislation, as a challenge to the State? This is not anarchy, in the romantic sense of the late nineteenth century, but a concept of politics that would establish solidarities and alliances beyond this or that particular nation-State. From this perspective, we could institute an international policy that would no longer be a policy in the traditional sense, i.e., subject to the authority of the State.

The idea of democracy (as opposed to the concept of republic) brings a kind of challenge to the Republic and to the traditional politics, something that is difficult to reconcile with political duties.

When I call for French law to be changed in order that hospitality is more in line with what it should be, it is the responsible citizen, asserting his desire of responsibility, who is expressing himself, and on the other side there is someone who is more than a citizen, endowed with a freedom to act, to speak or to receive whoever he wants in his home, whatever are the laws of the country of which I am a citizen. And, in doing so, *I claim to be calling for another politics, for a different definition of the political*. (Seffahi 1999, 145–146. My emphasis).

By dissociating the excess or the hyperbolicity of *unconditionality* from *sovereignty* – the hallmark *par excellence* of Deconstruction as a *meta-onto-phenomenological philosophical idiom*²⁰ – and by re-thinking sovereignty *from* and *in the name of just or messianic*

²⁰ “Deconstruction begins here. It requires a difficult, almost impossible but indispensable dissociation between unconditionality (justice without power) and sovereignty (right, power or might). Deconstruction is of the side of unconditionality, even there where it seems impossible, and not of the side of sovereignty, even there where it seems possible.” (Derrida and Roudinesco 2001, 153).

*unconditionality*²¹ – Derridean Deconstruction is thus a *meta-onto-logical philosophical idiom* which is, in itself, a gift that calls for vigilance and reminds us of the urgent responsibility to *re-think everything* anew and quite differently [*tout autrement*] in the hope and the *promise* of a different [*tout autre*] “living together” (see Derrida 2014b, 25) in the world – for a “*good living together*” (Ibid) *in peace* in this world. Linked to the thought and the work of Jacques Derrida, here we find once again that this *philosophical idiom of thought* is manifestly the bearer of lights for the extreme urgency of a new “world” of Enlightenment to come.

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²¹ “It’s not just a question of dissociating the drive for sovereignty and the demand for unconditionality as two symmetrically associated terms, but of questioning, criticising, deconstructing, if you like, one in the name of the other, sovereignty in the name of unconditionality” (Derrida 2003b, 197).

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