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*The Idea of History as Difference of Force:*  
Derrida Reading Nietzsche and Heidegger

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to prove that Derrida perceived history as difference of force and to clarify how he conceived the idea, how the idea relates to his other arguments, and how difficult it is for him to represent history as such.

Previous studies have often overlooked the fact that Derrida conceived history as the difference of force. However, the fact that this idea is consistent with Derrida's other arguments is indicative of its importance. In order to prove this consistency, we will develop his idea of history as the difference of force alongside his other ideas in order to be able to connect them to each other. This will demonstrate that the idea, although under studied, has great significance and merits as much attention as his other arguments do.

The idea, however, could only be realized and developed up to a certain point, which is to say that Derrida could not represent the *whole* of history as difference of force. Therefore, it is important to note that this paper also must be tentative, and the conclusion will be a hypothetical one that needs to be further developed.

In this paper, we will mainly examine two philosophers other than Derrida: Heidegger and Nietzsche. There are two reasons. First, Derrida often refers to Nietzsche when he emphasizes the differential characteristic of force. Second, when he reads Nietzsche, he often compares his reading of Nietzsche to Heidegger's reading. We can presume, therefore, that it was through his comparison of Heidegger with Nietzsche that Derrida conceived of history as difference of

force. More specifically, considering the difference between these two philosophers made it possible for Derrida to develop this particular notion of history. Therefore, we are justified in referring to Derrida's reading of these two philosophers when we examine the notion.

Let us consider one of the passages where Derrida represents history as difference of force. In "Force of Law," he says,

For me, it is always a question of differential force...but also and especially of all the paradoxical situations in which the greatest force and the greatest weakness strangely enough exchange places (*s'échangent étrangement*). And that is the whole history (*Et c'est toute l'histoire*).<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, "the differential character of force"<sup>2</sup> means that force is always considered an exchange of certain forces, which constitutes history. We will follow these exchanges in this paper.

Thus, even if Derrida criticizes Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, we should not reject Heidegger's reading as either a misunderstanding or a completely invalid interpretation. In short, the question of what is correct and what is incorrect does not matter. Rather, what is important, on the one hand, is for us to evaluate to a certain point the "validity"<sup>3</sup> of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, that is, its effectiveness and potential. On the other hand, we also have to point out its ineffectiveness, for a force can be effective in a certain context, but not in another. That is what is meant by its "differential character."

## 2. Heidegger

In this section, we will examine Derrida's reading of Heidegger. As

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1. Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority," trans. Mary Quaintance, *Cardozo Law Review*, vol. 11, 1990, 929.

2. *Ibid.*

3. The word "validity" comes from the Latin word "*valere*" which means "strong," "effective" and "well."

Heidegger remarks in “The *Spiegel* Interview,”<sup>4</sup> he confronts Nazism through his reading of Nietzsche. In the Nietzsche courses, for example, by considering Nietzsche as a metaphysician who thinks of being as life (*Sein als Leben*) and of beings as a whole (*Seienden im Ganzen*), he redeems Nietzsche’s ideas from the biological and racial interpretations later drawn from his works.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, his metaphysical reading of Nietzsche makes it possible for him to redeem Nietzsche’s ideas.

On the other hand, what does it make impossible? In the essay, “Good Will to Power” included in *Text and Interpretation*, Derrida demonstrates an exchange of possibility and impossibility which complicates Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche.

First, Derrida confirms and reformulates the above-mentioned merits of Heidegger’s metaphysical reading of Nietzsche: Heidegger considers Nietzsche to be the thinker of the consummation (*Vollendung*) of metaphysics and deals with his thought in its totality<sup>6</sup> in order to redeem him from the later biological and racial interpretations. However, Derrida points out that Heidegger, when he extracts the metaphysical thought of Nietzsche from his texts, excludes the passages and its interpretations which have something to do with Nietzsche’s biographical and empirical facts. As a result, Heidegger himself makes it impossible to avoid being the victim of a traditional distinction, that is, the distinction between the biographical and empirical facts about Nietzsche (in short, Nazism’s abusing of his ideas after his death, from which Heidegger seeks to redeem his ideas) and his essential thought (to which Heidegger attaches great importance).<sup>7</sup>

From Derrida’s remarks, we may deduce that on the one hand, Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche makes it *possible* to redeem the

4. “In 1936, the Nietzsche courses began. All who could hear at all heard this as a confrontation with National Socialism...In a certain sense it was a continuation of my Nietzsche courses, i.e., of my confrontation with National Socialism.” Cf. Martin Heidegger, “‘Only a God Can Save Us’: The *Spiegel* Interview (1966),” trans. W. Richardson, *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*, ed. Thomas Sheehan, Chicago: Precedent, 1981, 53f.

5. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Bd.1, Pfullingen: Neske, 1961, 526.

6. Jacques Derrida, “Guter Wille zur Macht (2),” *Text und Interpretation*, ed. Philippe Forget, München: Wilhelm Fink, 1984, 62.

7. *Ibid.*, 69.

“thinker of beings as a whole” from the empirical sciences (biology, for example) and racialism. On the other hand, however, a “totality,” through which Heidegger redeems him, makes it *impossible* for him to avoid the traditional distinction between empirical fact and essential thought. Here we find an exchange of possibility and impossibility.

Moreover, at the heart of the matter, there is a certain kind of “totality,” that is, in this case, beings as a “whole” and dealing with a thought in its “totality.” Although Heidegger seeks a certain kind of totality, it cannot help being caught up in the exchange of force and im/possibility. This exchange undermines it.

Derrida further develops this problem of the totality of life in many other texts. Perhaps the most important for our purposes, though, is a passage in the second volume of *The Beast and the Sovereign*, in which Derrida offers his interpretation of Heidegger’s *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, for it is here that he connects the problem of the totality of life to Heidegger’s notion of “historiality (*Geschichtlichkeit*).”

There are two points to note in advance. First, in this text we do not find the phrases “beings as a whole” and “being as life.” Instead, we find “the animal in general,” another formula for life as a whole. Second, this point of view of “the animal in general” is considered a “metaphysical” one in a different sense than “the empirical sciences,” in this case, “zoology,” which is the same sort of difference that we saw above (the difference between metaphysical, essential thought and empirical fact). Quoting Heidegger’s thesis, which concerns the animal being different from the stone and man (“the stone is worldless” and “man is world-forming”), that “the animal is poor in world,” Derrida claims that the thesis “has an absolutely general scope...Why the animal in general?...Because the general thesis is a thesis on animality as such (*über die Tierheit als solche*).”<sup>8</sup>

Here it is “as such (*als solche*)” that distinguishes the empirical sciences (zoology) from the thesis on the animal in general. The word plays the same role as that of “totality” in the text we examined above in that both of them distinguish a metaphysical thought from the

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8. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign*, vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey Bennington, eds. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, 193.

empirical sciences.

However, we may still ask: Why does “as such” distinguish them? Because, according to Heidegger, accepting certain beings as such, that is, as beings, as something that is there, and not as something else, is reserved only for *Dasein* (being-there): in other words, it is reserved only for man, and not for the animal. “As such” means “as beings,” which indicates that this point of view belongs to ontology or metaphysics, and not to the empirical sciences which do not deal with beings as beings, but as something already specialized into each discipline. That is why “as such” distinguishes metaphysics from other disciplines. From the point of view of “as such,” then, the animal in general appears only for *Dasein* or man. As we will see in the next quotation, this causes Derrida to qualify metaphysics as “onto-phenomenological.”

It is important to emphasize that this point of view, which makes *possible* the appearance of the animal in general, is reserved only for *Dasein* or man, and not for the animal. It is this *possibility* that enables Heidegger and *Dasein*, or man, to pose the thesis on the animal in general. Consequently, we must ask: What does this point of view of “as such” make *impossible* for Heidegger and *Dasein*?

Derrida points out “two malaises that resist Heidegger’s diagnosis.”<sup>9</sup> First, from the point of view of “the animal in general,” the differences among the animals are neglected and reduced.<sup>10</sup> Second, this point of view which reduces those differences is that of human *Dasein*, resulting in further emphasis of the difference between animal and man. Therefore, reducing the differences among the animals on the one hand and emphasizing the difference between animal and human *Dasein* on the other hand can be thought of as two sides of the same coin. If this is the case, both of them (the reduction and emphasis of difference) are done together from the same point of view of human *Dasein*, where Derrida finds the return of anthropocentrism that Heidegger seeks

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9. *Ibid.*, 197.

10. For example, speaking of the animal in general amounts to presupposing a knowledge which “would authorize itself to say the same thing on the subject of infusoria and mammals, of the bee and the cat, the dog and the chimpanzee, etc., about which it is naively assumed that they all have in common the same relation to the world (all supposedly “poor in world”...)” (*Ibid.*).

to avoid. As Derrida explains, “This phenomeno-ontology would then reflect the point of view of common human consciousness...it would surreptitiously reintroduce the very anthropologism it claims to avoid.”<sup>11</sup> As long as you have this human point of view, you cannot avoid reintroducing the anthropologism.

In addition, on all such occasions, an animality appears to you in a certain form, whereas another kind of animality — the differences in their characters, for example — hides itself. This is a suspension of judgment, an “*epochē*.” This means that the human *Dasein*’s point of view makes the appearance of the animal simultaneously *possible* and *impossible*. Here we encounter the exchange of im/possibility, and it is also here that Derrida finds “historiality” and “epocality” (which stems from *epochē*): Although “what Heidegger would be describing,” that is, “the animal as it appears to us...historically...in our human *Dasein*” is “irreproachable,” “historiality...and epocality” are “what is neither natural nor eternal — it changes, it can change, sometimes over thousands or millions of years, sometimes furtively, secretly, silently, in one second, for some absolute singularity.”<sup>12</sup>

Here, the link between “exchange” and “change” becomes evident. The exchange of possibility and impossibility, appearance and non-appearance (*epochē*) brings about the change in the world because this exchange takes place in the relationship between animal and man, each of whom have their own access to the world (“poor in world” and “world-forming”). Furthermore, it constitutes history, that is, history as difference of force.

Before concluding this section, we have to make a brief note. The appearance of beings “as such” is, according to Heidegger, truth as “unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*).” When he explains “as such,” Heidegger also uses the words “possibility (*Möglichkeit*)” and “ability (*Vermögen*).”<sup>13</sup> Derrida relates these words to “*walten*” in Heidegger’s

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11. *Ibid.*, 198.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, 337–338.

*Identity and Difference*,<sup>14</sup> referring to many words derived from “*walten*,”<sup>15</sup> which proves that, for Heidegger, the truth (the appearance in “as such”) has an essential relationship with force. We can conclude, then, that history as difference of force, as exchange of strong and weak powers, could be considered the history of the exchange of truth (appearance) and non-truth (non-appearance). That truth turns out to be non-truth is also Nietzsche’s primary concern.

### 3. Nietzsche

Nietzsche touches on these problems through his discussion of the “will to power.” By developing this theme, Nietzsche reduces the will to truth to the will to power and the question of truth/non-truth to the question of strong/weak force. In “Signature Event Context,” Derrida mentions Nietzsche by name when he points out that J. L. Austin is obliged to “substitute...the value of force, of difference of force” for “the authority of the truth *value*.”<sup>16</sup> Although we could develop to some degree the theme of difference of force in relation to the field of speech act theory, we need to examine, instead, the theme of “will to power,” because speech act theory supposes an actor of speech to be, so to speak, a *center of force*, that ends up reducing the difference of force and losing the advantage that the theme of the “will to power” has. By looking carefully at this theme to grasp the implications of it, we will be able to find one purpose of Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche, which we

14. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign*, vol. 2, eds. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, trans. Geoffrey Bennington, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, 255–256. The English translator of *Identität und Differenz* translates “*walten*” as “prevail.” Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, New York: Harper & Row, 1969, 65.

15. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign*, vol. 2, eds. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, trans. Geoffrey Bennington, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, 280. For example, *durchwalten*, *Mitwalten*, *umwalten*, *verwalten*, *Verwaltung*, *Übergewalt*, *vorwaltend*, *bewältigen*, *unbewältigt*, *Gewalt*, *Allgewalt*, *Gewalt-tat*, *Gewalt-tätigkeit*, etc.

16. Jacques Derrida, “Signature Event Context,” *Limited Inc*, trans. Samuel Weber, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988, 13.

will return to later.

For now, let us examine this theme. According to Nietzsche, the will to truth, which is one form of the will to power, regards the world as becoming (*Werden*) with contempt and longs for a stable world.<sup>17</sup> However, for Nietzsche, this longing shows its impotence (*Ohnmacht*) in relation to the world as becoming.<sup>18</sup> Still, affirmation of becoming does not always mean strength of the power: if it turns out that the truth made by the will, for example “meaning” and “aim,” is fabricated, then nihilism has come,<sup>19</sup> in which Nietzsche finds not only the strength of power but also its weakness.

Nihilism...may be a sign of strength (*Stärke*); spiritual vigor may have increased to such an extent that the *goals* toward which man has marched *hitherto*...are no longer suited to it...; on the other hand, [nihilism may be] a sign of *insufficient* strength, to fix a goal, a “wherefore”...<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, the strength and the weakness of the same power are interchangeable, depending on what goal the power fixes. For example, a power to fix a certain goal is weaker than a power which does not need the same goal, but stronger than a power which cannot fix it yet. This shows that one can consider the latter, that is, the power which cannot fix the goal yet, to be a strong power that does not collapse even without a goal.

There is no conclusive power that rules and governs the “will to power” in the entire world. On the contrary, this theme of the “will to power” disjoints the totality into an infinite number of perspectives and interpretations: the world turns out to be full of them.

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17. “The contempt and hatred of all that perishes, changes, and varies: whence comes this valuation of stability? Obviously, the will to truth is merely the longing for a stable world” (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power: An Attempted Transvaluation of All Values*, Books 1 (*The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, vol. 15), trans. Anthony M. Ludovici, New York: Russell, 1964, 88).

18. “‘The will to truth’ — *is the impotence of the will to create.*” (*Ibid.*, 89)

19. *Ibid.*, Books 2, 8.

20. *Ibid.*, Books 1, 21.



The important thing is that even the interpretation that the world is the “will to power” is itself one perspective, one interpretation, and one will to power. For example, if this theory of the “will to power” becomes a fixed and invariable truth, it is weak because it never explains the fact of becoming (*Werden*) of the world. However, it is still strong and has possibility because one can use this fixed truth negatively in order to show the fact of becoming. (In effect, this is almost how Derrida employs or reads traditional texts and fixed theories to reveal the infinite differentiation of the world, that is, *différance*.)<sup>21</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

In this concluding section, we will explore one principle feature of Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche: the interpretation that the world is the “will to power” is itself one perspective and one will to power. There is no will that grasps the whole world from outside of it. Each will is divided *in itself*. Through this point, we find one purpose of Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche, that is, to question the “ipseity (*ipséité*)” of the will itself. If it turns out that the world is full of fabrication and mere appearance (*Schein*), even a will to truth could be considered, from another perspective, *self-deceitful*. If this is the case, then the will to power never totalizes itself in ipseity. Therefore, when Derrida poses, in his essay “History of the Lie,” the enigmatic and impossible formula “deceive oneself” — in other words, the will to deceive itself, to “lie to oneself” — what he actually intends is, in short, to question the ipseity of the “will to power.” Therefore, the first articulation of his idea with his other arguments is as follows: The idea of history as difference of force can be articulated in conjunction with the problematics of “self-deception” and the impossibility of the ipseity of will discussed in “History of Lie.”

Let us go back to Heidegger. And let us recall that Derrida argued that

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21. Derrida refers to this negative use of traditional metaphysics as conserving metaphysical texts through “crossing out (*sous rature*).” Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976, 50. “Crossing out” concerns his key concept of “writing (*écriture*).”

“phenomeno-ontology would...reflect the point of view of common human consciousness” and “it would...reintroduce...anthropologism.” Based on this assertion, we can detect the problematics of perspective in not only Nietzsche’s “will to power” but also Heidegger’s *Dasein*. The latter can be thought of as taking an anthropocentric perspective where animal “as such” appears but the differences among the animals do not in epicality and historicity. Here the question of *Dasein* is posed concerning the animal: Who gazes at the animal? Who has the animal in his view? And who chases and follows the animal? These questions are expressed in the title of Derrida’s work *L’Animal que donc je suis*, which can be translated, “the animal that therefore I am/follow.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the second articulation with his other arguments is as follows: The idea of history as difference of force can be articulated in conjunction with *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (and I follow) and the problematics of perspective.

By showing that Derrida’s idea of history as difference of force is consistent with his other arguments, these two articulations prove the validity of the claim made in this paper. Furthermore, these connections demonstrate the importance of this concept, which surely merits as much attention as Derrida’s other, more frequently studied arguments.

Despite the fact that Derrida discovered the key or clue for representing such a history, he did not actually develop the idea further. The reason for this is that he could not represent history as a *whole*. “Force,” “truth” and “history”: None of them can subordinate the exchange of strong/weak force and truth/non-truth, and combine all these exchanges into a total to reconstruct history from one point of view. *Difference* of force cannot be such a principle. This is a difficulty he faces when he represents history as difference of force and this is why he could not represent *all* of history as such. Rather, all he can do is to mark the differences infinitely, revealing history to be a series of infinite exchanges without any regulative and totalizing point of view.

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22. The abridged English translation by David Wills was first published in the journal *Critical Inquiry* (vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 2002), 369–418) with the title “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow).” Then the entire translation was published after six years: *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.

By so doing, Derrida runs the risk of making his own theory of history a fiction because he can no longer rely on truth as truth turned out to be subject to that infinite exchange.

This is also what his remark may have meant: “And that is the whole history (*et c’est toute l’histoire*).” On the one hand, the French word “*histoire*” means “story,” “narrative” and even “fiction” or “fib.” Therefore, all the things that Derrida has discussed, that is, history as various exchanges and difference of force, might be a mere fiction. There is no guarantee of truthfulness because “truth” itself is a kind of will to power and is necessarily involved in the exchange of force. From here, difficulty arises for Derrida when he represents history as such and this difficulty is precisely another implication of his remark. The French word “*histoire*” means, on the other hand, “difficulty,” “problem” and “trouble.” Therefore, history as difference of force might be all fiction (*toute l’histoire*), and is definitely troublesome (*toute l’histoire*).

## 5. Several Directions for Future Research

Starting from the brief passage in “Force of Law,” on the idea of history as difference of force, we have explained and amplified it through interpreting and developing some of Derrida’s own works. However, now we face the difficulty of developing the idea further. Although difference of force cannot *independently* be a new principle which reconstructs history as a whole, it might be able to deconstruct such a principle and suggest what another idea of history would be like. With this in mind, we should reformulate our argument and reconsider it in a broader view in an attempt to clarify what kind of conception of history Derrida’s idea took aim at.

Finally, in this section, we will shift the emphasis away from Derrida’s own texts where he directly mentions “history” to focus on classical arguments from Kant to Heidegger. By presenting a brief overview of the role that the unity of “force” or “possibility” has played when “history” and “teleology” come into question in the western philosophy, we can trace some directions where the idea of history as difference of force could be further developed in Derrida.

First, in the “Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic” of *Critic of Pure Reason*, Kant makes an argument about “the regulative use of the ideas of pure reason.” As an example, he discusses a “fundamental power.” The regulative use of the idea of the “fundamental power” makes possible the systematic representation of all powers:

At first glance the various appearances of one and the same substance show such diversity that one must assume almost as many powers as there are effects...The idea of a *fundamental power* (*Grundkraft*)...is at least the problem set by a systematic representation of the manifoldness of powers. The logical principle of reason demands this unity...<sup>23</sup>

This logical principle of reason, “where the understanding alone does not attain to rules,” helps the understanding through the idea of “the fundamental power,” and creates “unanimity among its [understanding’s] various rules under one principle.”<sup>24</sup> First, the understanding synthesizes the manifoldness of the representation. And second, the idea of pure reason unifies the understanding’s various rules. In this way the systematic representation of all powers as the causality of substance is brought about. Here the unification is duplicated: the unification in the subjective faculties and that in the objective powers. These two aspects are combined through the regulative use of the idea, that is, the assumption that systematically represents the powers *as if* (*als ob*) there is a fundamental power.

In “Analytic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” in *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, this unity is reformulated as “the disposition of the cognitive powers”:

But, if cognitions are to be able to be communicated, then the mental state, i.e., the disposition of the cognitive powers for a cognition in general (*die Stimmung der Erkenntniskräfte zu einer*

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23. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 593–594 (A649/B677). Emphasis in the original.

24. *Ibid.*, 593 (A648/B676).

*Erkenntnis überhaupt*)...must also be capable of being universally communicated...This disposition cannot be determined except through the feeling (not by concepts)...since the universal communicability of a feeling presupposes a common sense, the latter [common sense] must be able to be assumed with good reason.<sup>25</sup>

We have to be careful so as not to oversimplify these arguments. Common sense cannot be identified either with the ideas of pure reason, nor with the regulative principles. The central faculties discussed in the first *Critique* and those in the third *Critique* are not identical. However, when “the subjective purposiveness” constitutes “the satisfaction [which is] universally communicable,”<sup>26</sup> a certain kind of purpose determinates the relation of powers, that is, “the disposition of the cognitive powers for a cognition in general.” This is similar to the first *Critique* in which the logical principle of reason unifies the understanding’s various rules through the regulative use of the idea of pure reason (the fundamental power).

Furthermore, that regulative use gives purposiveness to nature in the “first introduction” to the third *Critique*: “We shall in the future also use the expression ‘technique’ where objects of nature are sometimes merely *judged as if* (*beurteilt, als ob*) their possibility were grounded in art...we will also call nature technical.”<sup>27</sup> (The purposiveness here is objective as opposed to the subjective one in the aesthetic judgment, as we saw above.) Therefore, purposiveness always supposes, in Kant, a certain kind of unity of the powers, regardless of whether it is the fundamental power or the disposition of the cognitive powers. And such supposition is made with the help of “as if.”

Second, in “Force and the Understanding” in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, unity and manifoldness of force lead the “consciousness” to the “*self-consciousness*.” In other words, the unification is duplicated

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25. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 123.

26. *Ibid.*, 106.

27. *Ibid.*, 7. Emphasis in the original.

here again. On the one hand, force, through its “play,” returns to itself.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the consciousness, through this “play,” experiences itself.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, this return and experience of itself accompanies a transition from the sensible to the intelligible. It is through the play of forces as the appearance that the understanding experiences itself. It is often said that Hegel criticized Kant for his division between the sensible and the intelligible. However, when Hegel makes the transition from the former to the latter, he appeals to the return of force to itself just as Kant appeals to a certain kind of unification of the powers. This return gives a goal or destination to the consciousness, bringing about the transition from the “consciousness” to the “self-consciousness,” from the appearance to the essence, and from the sensible to the intelligible.

Third, Husserl, in *Ideas*, which was published in 1913, explains the structure of “horizon” and poses the concept of an “idea in the Kantian sense,” which is considered to be a *telos* in Husserlian phenomenology. The consciousness progresses infinitely toward it. Through this idea, a series of mental processes are seized upon as a “unity.” Husserl founds this progression upon a certain kind of *possibility*, that is, “eidetic possibilities (*eidetische Möglichkeiten*).”<sup>30</sup>

Although Husserlian phenomenology later developed in a drastic

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28. “This *totality*, as a totality or as a *universal*, is what constitutes the *inner* [of things], the play of forces (*das Spiel der Kräfte*) as a reflection of the inner into itself” (G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, 87, §143). Emphasis in the original.

29. “We see that in the *inner* world of appearance, the understanding in truth comes to know nothing else but appearance, but not in the shape of a play of forces, but rather that play of Forces in its absolutely universal moments and in their movement; in fact, the understanding experiences only *itself*” (*Ibid.*, 102–103, §165). Emphasis in the original.

30. “A mental process seized upon in a mode of ‘attention’...has a horizon of inattention in the background with relative differences of clarity and obscurity... Eidetic possibilities are rooted therein: (the eidetic possibility) of making the unregarded an object of the pure regard...In the continuous progression from seizing-upon to seizing-upon...we now seize upon the *stream of mental processes as a unity*. We do not seize upon it as we do a single mental process but rather in the manner of an *idea in the Kantian sense*” (Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book, General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten, Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983, 197). Emphasis in the original.

way, the fundamental structure of the ability or possibility grounding the subject and its progression toward an idea has not changed. In *Experience and Judgment*, which is compiled from a number of separate manuscripts written from 1910s to 1920s and which belongs to the late Husserl's phenomenology, the horizon is referred to as the "realm of possibilities (*Spielraum von Möglichkeiten*)."<sup>31</sup> In *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, which was published in 1929, he explicitly states that the consciousness has a "teleological structure" and tendency toward "reason."<sup>32</sup>

We have already examined Nietzsche and Heidegger. As a final step, let us contextualize them briefly within this tradition. While Kant's "as if (*als ob*)" regulates the various rules, Heidegger's "as (*als*)" or "as-structure (>*als*<-*Struktur*)" opens the difference between identity and multiplicity or polysemy, being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiende*), that is, the ontological difference. Therefore, "as" opens a *possibility* of interpretation. For example, in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger, as we saw, paraphrases "as-structure" into "possibility (*Möglichkeit*)" of true or false.<sup>33</sup> And such multiplicity or polysemy of being brings about the "history of being (*Seinsgeschichte*)": Being has been transmitted (*geschickt*) *as* idea, *energeia*, substance, monad etc. In other words, it is a history of interpretation of being *as* beings. Nietzsche's "will to power" can be regarded as a principle that brings unity to the world and history. Through this principle, all truths or doctrines are considered to be the will to power, aiming at its growth. Although Heidegger's "history of being" and Nietzsche's "will to power" are different from the classical teleology, they still share some

31. Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, ed. L. Landgrebe, trans. J. S. Churchill and K. Ameriks, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, 36.

32. "Thus *evidence is a universal mode of intentionality, related to the whole life of consciousness*. Thanks to evidence, the life of consciousness has an *all-pervasive teleological structure*, a pointedness toward 'reason' and even a pervasive tendency toward it" (Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. D. Cairns, Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1969, 160).

33. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, 337–338.

characteristics with it: history has the essential relationship with force and is based on the division between man and animal. However, this is too involved a subject to be treated here in detail.

Therefore, in the history of western philosophy, unity of “force” or “possibility” has always formed the totality of history and directed it toward a certain *telos*. It becomes clear that Derrida’s idea of history as *difference* of force is a radical and ambitious attempt to *differentiate* the totality and its tradition.

In these classical arguments, history has some essential properties: Derrida, however, has disputed them in his works. They can be classified into three groups which suggest what another conception of history would be like, if not history as a whole and even if he does not represent the idea as that of “history” to the letter.

The first is the *calculability* and the *predictability*. Unity of forces renders history a mere development of the possible. Historical development is already programmed and controlled by “condition of possibility.” On the other hand, difference of force represents history as “event (*événement*)” or “urgency (*urgence*)” of “the impossible (*l’impossible*),” in short, “the messianic (*le messianique*).” Derrida, in the second part of *Rogues*, criticizes the former historical view, represented by Kant and Husserl, as “neutralization of the event.”<sup>34</sup>

The second is the *organic structure*. The process of history is considered to be, as we saw, that of the unification of the cognitive powers, that is, in Kantian terms, the architecture or, in Hegelian terms, the system of reason. In contrast, Derrida’s notion “placed in the abyss (*mise en abyme*)” deconstructs them into a chaotic *différance*. Derrida develops this in *The Truth in Painting*.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, these architectures and systems are not an aggregate or a set but rather are organic and dialectical since they have their purposes. Here things and nature are also supposed to have purpose. The thingness of the thing which resists the organic dialectic is developed in *Specters of Marx* as well.<sup>36</sup>

34. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. P. A. Brault, M. Naas, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.

35. Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. G. Bennington and I. McLeod, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

36. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the*



Appearance of the specter makes the time “out of joint.”

The third is the *distinction* between *man* and *animal*. All the cognitive powers or at least the higher cognitive powers are restricted within man, while the animal is generally considered to be unable to live in time or history, setting up a purpose. However, Derrida, in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, refers to an autobiographical episode and takes himself “back to a time before the fall, before shame,”<sup>37</sup> the time when man has not yet named what is called the animal and had his “*superiority*” or power over them. Then man follows them and is after them. However, since it is before the fall, “this ‘after’...is not in time, nor is it temporal: It is the very genesis of time.”<sup>38</sup> Therefore, that time does not belong to the history of force or possibility of man toward a certain *telos*. Moreover, that time “separates autobiography from confession.”<sup>39</sup> Since the latter articulates with “truth,” it seems that the former articulates with “history” as a fiction, as we saw above.

Therefore, although the idea of history as difference of force cannot be a new principle of history as a whole, Derrida, through contrasting it with the classical arguments on history, opens up the possibility of another conception of history. It would be a notion of unpredictable history or event without any organic structure subsuming things and nature, where man takes himself back to the genesis of time without any superiority or power over the animal. Although these characteristics are still abstract and not yet fully explained or developed, they can be the basis for future research on the problem of history and force in Derrida.

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*New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, New York: Routledge, 1994.

37. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, 21.

38. *Ibid.*, 17.

39. *Ibid.*, 21.