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USE AND ABUSE OF THE DOUBLE: PLATO AND KANT

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*Use and Abuse of the Double:
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Philosophy's Double Vision

The double appears as if it were a character in a dream, directing those who track this peculiar figure by probing shady aspects of a certain genre of narratives, by, that is, telling a story, starting with a story embedded in and determinative for the history of philosophy. Since this chapter foregrounds philosophy proper, I suggest, then, that we pursue philosophy as narrative, but narrative cast under the auspices of something like phenomenological description and thus understood as capable of housing ontology, not reduced to the currently fashionable, sometimes facile status of “social construct” or of, simply, fiction (we must seek clues regarding where the bodies are actually buried). Throughout this project I’ll favor the cultivation of a story rather than elaboration of a traditional philosophical argument, which is why I want to begin here by casting the double as a character rather than, for example, as a “trope” or other configuration of a more rarefied or academic variety; this ambition might sound absurd, but then so is its object. At the same time, and later on along the way, it is worth trying to represent fiction and music as if they were animating philosophy or engaging in *ontological enactments*. I’d like to think of stories as philosophical material rather than of philosophy as more or less simply fiction (oddly enough, wily Nietzsche might have preferred it this way). And the first stories I’ll tell work themselves out in straightforward, canonic philosophy.

In a myriad of configurations, the ontological motif of the double is all over philosophy, often appearing in its existential profiles while also frequently cornered by metaphysics. Its shape-shifting ubiquity and persistent intrusion suggest both its necessity and the way in which it fuels and exceeds philosophy itself. Philosophy finds power and security in the double but from it simultaneously inherits countless forms of dependence and instability.

I will introduce the problem of the double by focusing primarily on patterns exhibited in selective passages of texts by two archetypal luminaries, Plato and, more briefly, Kant. Both philosophers seem to resolve what for each is a fundamental philosophical problem by recourse to doubles, although what might come across as calculable, clear, and relatively static in these resolutions is shadowed by that which is wild, ambiguous, and fluid (and is not a shadow a familiar double, one that appears wherever there is light?).

Regarding Plato, I have chosen him to illustrate how philosophically deep and *archaic* the issue is. With him, I will reexamine the oppositions embodied in his use of divisions and divides, the sense in which the sensate world becomes dependent on and conjoined with an immaterial world, and by extension, his apparent and implicit thought that reality is anywhere but here. But Plato is also not so simple, and he does not conceal the sense in which the double eludes him, so I will attend to more than just obvious oppositions.

Regarding Kant, inhabitant of a double city—Prussian Königsberg is now Russian Kaliningrad—I have chosen him because his efforts to deploy and insist on the necessity of a double analysis are without question the most important and sophisticated in modern academic philosophy, so with him I will highlight and explore a suspended form of the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental domains, a bifurcation that echoes Plato and secures philosophical necessity but, possibly, at the cost of this world; that is, the price for saving philosophy is the assertion of the necessity of a steady, purely structural domain of reality, a second world, a second light. Kant is a formalist, which will enable my relatively partial or narrow attention to him to remain relatively compact.

Plato will occupy the bulk of this chapter, followed by a visit to Kant. The very last part of the chapter, though, will offer an initial indication of the wilder and darker side of the double before turning to ontological configurations of the double different from more historically typical philosophical engagements. I will take up philosophically atypical configurations in later chapters. Yet even along the way here, Plato and Kant cannot be confined to or by metaphysics, so one might anticipate encounters with many occasions and species of the double, including, for example, not only hierarchized

binary oppositions—I am not so primarily interested in the weighting—but the trickster double, the benign double, the threatening double, the dominating double, the copulating double—“copula” is “to be” or, giving it a less grammatical emphasis, fucking is the condition of existence—not to mention the the spectral double, dialogical double, the diabolical double, the deadly double, and many more. In the long run, and insofar as it is possible, I would like to pass through and then move beyond a by-now familiar and sometimes formulaic discourse about hierarchized binary oppositions, preferring to approach the topic in terms of something like an accumulating list or archive of types. Later chapters will, I hope, be more entertaining. But we need to do some work first.

The terms of philosophy’s surgical attempts to master and deploy the double—e.g. reality/appearance, being/nothingness, or the basic, self-assured gesture, “this, not that”—reflect something significant about the double that evades philosophy’s grasp and which yet it seems philosophy cannot help but try to get ahold of, to secure and subdue. Philosophy has always kept a focus on and tried to sort the double out, as if philosophy were the choreographer of all pairings, and as if its opening distinctions and insistences were its own preference and innovation, as if, that is, it had a choice and were in charge of the rules of identification: “This differentiation is of my own making,” it seems to want to say, “I am the origin of reality and appearance, I fear no ghosts, I am the origin of all distinctions, all lines of division.”¹

Philosophy would thus like to represent itself as self-originating and self-replicating, abruptly bursting forth beyond the lures of conventional narrativity in a dazzling yet disciplined display of insight. Failing that fantasy, it might imagine making its entrance something like the virgin goddess herself, born from the head of Zeus fully developed and armed for combat, a prospect that seems apt given Plato’s suggestion that Athena means *nous*,² although this association with mind has a dissonant resonance with the image of Zeus’ actual head, not to mention with Athena’s lance and shield and virginity. It is noteworthy that the sex in these images of emergences or non-begettings remains at a remove, one of philosophy’s first awkward but inevitable moves having been the declaration for mind before the distractions of the body (the double can be distracting when it’s not simply dissimulating or projecting a mirage). But philosophy

in all of its mortality originates neither from itself nor from the head of a god but is something like an effect of and deeply implicated in the double, which is embodied in originary difference, including the originary difference between a woman and a man. I'll touch on this last particular issue in this chapter by glancing at relevant passages of the *Symposium*, but more extensively later on in the book when I take up the theme of heterosexuality.

As an encounter with Plato's *Sophist* will illustrate, philosophy tends to see itself as the hunter, either tracking the truth through its bifurcations or stalking its own double, who might turn out to be an elusive sophist, the one from whom philosophy must distinguish itself in order to establish its own identity. Alternatively, however, it might be fruitful to suggest that philosophy has always been both summoned and stalked by that which was always as if waiting for it to appear, summoned and stalked, that is, by its double. Translated into the language of philosophy, the condition of the possibility of philosophy is thus not itself philosophical, but is also not "not philosophical."

Before working with Plato, and in order to establish the relevance of this issue for contemporary philosophy, it is worthwhile to cultivate some context by observing more recent philosophical efforts to grapple with the double. I will signal the thread of tradition I'm following by briefly flagging some specific highlights from twentieth century continental philosophy. The ensuing essay will mimic the serial aspect of a traditional academic essay but if I were a phenomenologist, I might consider it to be more of an exercise in eidetic variations on a theme, the focal theme being either the double or Plato and Kant, who, according to Nietzsche, themselves comprise a singular double of historical and philosophical import, bookends of sorts, the sunny south and icy north conjoined together, constituting an odd pair.

Being's Other

Featuring what is from one side the indifferent yet from the other side desperate drama of the relation between things and nothing, Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* could be read as an elaborate, epic-scale homage to the philosophical double,³ particularly given the powerful and liberating sense in which that text dispenses with dialectical philosophy's devotion to the third—the third had been mummified, done

to death by post-Kantian, pre-Nietzschean logorheics—Sartre thereby obliterating any delusions regarding the resolution of ontological conflict. I want to tune into only one brief passage of this seminal text, and so assume on the part of the reader familiarity with everything that precedes it.

Sartre opens the conclusion of the book with a section entitled, “In-itself and For-itself: Metaphysical Implications,” noting that “... after our description of the in-itself and the for-itself, it appeared to us difficult to establish a bond between them, and we feared that we might fall into an insurmountable dualism”⁴ (note: “fear of dualism,” an articulation of a phobic relation to a conceptually uncontrollable double.) He then writes that, “For consciousness there is no being except for this precise obligation to be a revealing intuition of something. What does this mean except that consciousness is the Platonic *Other*?” In a way that will become more relevant later in this chapter, he continues, “We may recall the fine description which the Stranger in the *Sophist* gives of this ‘other,’ which can be apprehended only ‘as in a dream,’ which has no being except its being-other... “ (Sartre 1956, p. 618). The configuration of the double cast as dream—an exemplary reference point—will return in subsequent chapters in my project, but what is of note here is Sartre’s resolution of the question of dualism in his text, since what he does in his efforts to confront the non-reciprocity and schism harbored in his depiction of the relation between being and nothingness is observe that “The question of the totality, however, does not belong to the province of ontology,” (Sartre 1956, p. 624), but belongs, rather, to metaphysics. So, “For ontology it makes no difference whether we consider the for-itself articulated in the in-itself as a well marked *duality* or as a disintegrated being. It is up to metaphysics to decide which will be more profitable for knowledge... “ And then he writes, “After having decided the question of the origin of the for-itself and of the nature of the phenomenon of the world, the metaphysician will be able to attack various problems of primary importance... “ (Sartre 1956, pp. 624-25). And then Sartre moves onto another issue he asserts is also beyond ontology, the ethical implications of Sartrean phenomenology (Sartre never did publish his promised ethics, but his double, de Beauvoir did, and she labeled her ethics “ambiguous”).

What Sartre has accomplished in this passage is remarkable. First of all, he has explicitly acknowledged the critical problem that he has constructed after hundreds of

pages of epic ontology. Second, he has invoked as an illustration or even an ally Plato, who some existentialists, such as Nietzsche, might be inclined to view as the metaphysician par excellence (note thus that Sartre simultaneously shifts the burden to metaphysics just as he decides to lean on the patriarch of metaphysics). More specifically, Sartre has cited the Stranger in the *Sophist*, a dialogue rife with and defined by a myriad of doubles; in fact the Stranger is a strange reference for Sartre since, as a *xenos*, he is an openly ambiguous character, both guest and alien, maybe a friend but maybe not, probably not Sartre's friend (possibly, though, a character in a novel by Sartre's friend, Albert Camus). This reference does nothing to defuse but only intensifies the problem of dualism at work in Sartre's text. Third, by rapidly deferring the problem of dualism to metaphysics, Sartre is engaging in an interesting maneuver. Insofar as it seeks to distract attention from the ornate yet ultimately austere dualism spelled out by Sartre's truncated dialectic, the tactic is in the first instance purely rhetorical, pitched not to philosophers but to sophomoric suckers (probably the very readers who never got that far into the book). Maybe more important, this effort to unburden ontology and to escape responsibility—this exercise in bad faith—is a sophistic claim that underestimates the power of metaphysics, conflating its own idiosyncratic breakdown of sub-disciplines with a deferral of philosophical import, as if specialists can now take over after Sartre has done the heavy ontological lifting. Finally, the subtitle of *Being and Nothingness* is *An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, and it seems very peculiar that a Heideggerian-inspired ontologist should remain relatively unconcerned about questions of metaphysics or could believe that one could simply sidestep these concerns.

In a nutshell, this steadfast reluctance to acknowledge the way that his attempt to harness the double has turned him metaphysical is emblematic of Sartre's undoing: While a philosopher's philosopher, Sartre managed to build a massive trap for himself and then pretend that he wasn't stuck in it. This trap was the effect of trying to harness the double, which leads to the question, was it Sartre's doing, or the double's? Well, better to submit to the power of the double than to yield to the resolution proffered by dialectic's third.

After Sartre, continental philosophy turned more clever, if not more honest. In the second half of the twentieth century, a prominent thread of philosophy devoted much of its retrospective energy in attending to hierarchized binary oppositions, prominent and specific, textual and archaeological. This was a necessary exercise in documenting the contours and effects of metaphysical baggage, and its exercises opened up the problem in incisive ways, ways that just begin to appreciate the inevitable power of the double. Before turning to Plato himself, I will briefly highlight what are selectively but clearly two of the most significant examples relevant to the problem.

Plato's Dilemma

In *White Mythology*, Jacques Derrida explores the necessarily enabling and yet simultaneously disruptive intrusion of metaphor into philosophy, observing that “Metaphor is less in the philosophical text (and in the rhetorical text coordinated with it) than the philosophical text is within metaphor.”⁵ This thought, a thought that features a certain ambiguous yet necessary double, worries the tradition of Platonism and would perhaps worry Plato too, he whose clever writing claimed a reverence for unadorned speech, he who expressed reservations about sophists, rhetoricians, and poets, those whose concern is not with the truth but with the profusion of mesmerizing metaphors and, well then, with words about words (or at least Plato's muse, Socrates, had such reverence, reservations, and concerns). The problem—the threat—would seem to involve the effect of certain kinds of words. However, the problem is more basic and pervasive than that.

Derrida's essay, *Plato's Pharmacy*⁶ opens with reference to Plato's *Phaedrus*, and more specifically with Plato's characterization of writing in its relation to truth as a *pharmakon*, as a drug, “which acts as both a remedy and poison... This charm, this spellbinding virtue, this power of fascination can be—alternately or simultaneously—beneficent or maleficent” (Derrida 1981, p. 70), thus establishing from the outset a certain doubling and thus fundamental instability in both Plato's discourse and, by extension and inheritance of infection, philosophy more generally. It is in the first instance about the apparent skepticism of Plato, the writer, regarding written

philosophy, and as Derrida notes regarding the translation of the Greek word— translation not just into modern French but “between Greek and Greek”—“With this problem of translation we will thus be dealing with nothing less than the problem of the very passage into philosophy” (Derrida 1981, p. 72), philosophy always concerned with its own origins, the passage into being what it is. How does it pass into being, and what then threatens it?

Central to Plato’s critique of writing is his antipathy toward sophists, toward those dissimulators who traffic in imitations of the truth. As Derrida observes, “For it is above all against sophistic that this diatribe against writing is directed... The man who relies on writing, who brags about the knowledge and power it assures him... has all the features of the sophist: ‘the imitator of him who knows.’” (Derrida 1981, p. 106). As Plato depicts it, this is because the written text is about not spontaneous discourse but the replacement of and distancing from memory and thus the departure from the truth. “The sophist thus sells the signs and insignias of science: not memory itself (*mneme*), only monuments (*hypomnemata*), inventories, archives, citations, copies, accounts, tales, lists, notes, duplicates, chronicles, genealogies, references. Not memory but memorials” (Derrida 1981, p. 107). The sophist thus relies not on his own power but on an external gimmick, on some *other* thing. Derrida’s references here are to the *Lesser Hippias*, and then, turning to the *Greater Hippias* and the *Sophist*, he continues:

In truth, the sophist only pretends to know everything; his “polymathy” (*The Sophist*, 232a) is never anything but pretense. Insofar as it *lends a hand* to hypomnesia and not to live memory, it, too, is foreign to true science, to anamnesia in its properly psychic motion, to truth in the process of (its) presentation, to dialectics. Writing can only mime them (Derrida 1981, p. 107).

However, he continues, “What Plato is attacking in sophistic, therefore, is not simply recourse to memory but, within such recourse, the substitution of mnemonic device for live memory, of the prosthesis for the organ... What Plato *dreams* of is a memory with no sign. That is, with no supplement... no *pharmakon*” (Derrida 1981, p. 108 & 109). And this, for Plato, is an ontological threat, since “... here, the supplement *is* not, is not a being (*on*). It is nevertheless not a simple nonbeing (*me on*), either. Its slidings slip out of the simple alternative presence/absence. *That* is the danger... writing appears

to Plato... as... the representative of a representative” (Derrida 1981, p. 109). In short, and through the monuments bequeathed us by Plato—monuments which insure its inseparability from writing—philosophy itself, ontology’s home, is threatened by an *other* ontology, one that condemns philosophy not to sophistry but to an inability to escape sophistic... except through a *pharmakon*, a potion that can go either way. Which is to say that sophistry is philosophy’s ineluctable double, and that truth is thus inevitably compromised, compromised in advance, a failure.

Socrates was a memory for Plato, but Plato bequeathed us with a memorial, a surrogate, a substitute, a figurine, a *kolossos*.⁷ Dialectics in all of its attentive yet divided fisticuffs would seem to be the antidote. But then “The text excludes dialectics” (Derrida 1981, p. 122), which would seem to indicate that the written text—“weakened speech, something not completely dead: a living-dead, a reprieved corpse, a deferred life, a semblance of breath” (Derrida 1981, p. 143)—offers no cure, no *pharmakon*. Except, perhaps, for the hemlock—the *pharmakon*—depicted in the *Phaedo*, the text that embalms Socrates and offers him as a god whose immortality hinges on his death, a sorcerer’s trick indeed, constituting not an illusion but something somewhere other than between reality and appearance.

Nietzsche’s Double Teasing Plato’s Double

Derrida’s observations indicate a fundamentally disruptive and possibly fatal force at work in the discourse of philosophy, in, more specifically, the text of Plato (quite literally fatal in the case of Socrates). Gilles Deleuze finds an intimately related, but philosophically *recuperative* dynamic at work in Plato himself, one set in motion yet in the same instance beyond Plato’s control—create something and once it’s out there, it’ll tend to have a life of its own—one equally animated by a double intimately related to the oscillating doubles and myriad of disruptive, polysemic ghosts that concern Derrida (it is worth mentioning that Deleuze cites *Plato’s Pharmacy* in his notes). This dynamic is advanced by Plato as an analytical tool, although it might more honestly and accurately be characterized as a rhetorical tactic that unwittingly serves to compromise a philosophical strategy. If one’s aim were to preserve Plato—to preserve him the way that he embalmed Socrates—one might perceive this dynamic as a threat. Yet this

double is launched by Plato—it is his apparent choice—and it is thus his own doing and possible undoing, or at least it becomes so in the hands of Deleuze, who is interested not in preserving Plato but in reversing him.

“The Platonic project,” writes Deleuze, “comes to light only when we turn back to the method of division, for this method is not just one dialectical procedure among others.”⁸ This method, which is deployed in several Platonic texts, proceeds through an identificative process that breaks things down into pairs of contrasts and contraries (I shall get more specific in my own reading of the *Sophist*), and it asserts a difference that in establishing its terms transforms and in an uncanny sense destabilizes rather than masters them, destabilizes not the individual terms but the entire system they are deployed to uphold. It is thus in the very text of Plato that Deleuze locates Nietzsche’s “reversal of Platonism,” the effect of which would be “... the abolition of the world of essences *and* of the world of appearance” (Deleuze 1990, p. 253). Quite an ambition, particularly retrojected back 2,400 years (or, possibly, this is a reference not to time but to the immortality of a mummy).

“The characteristic of division is to surmount the duality of myth and dialectic, and to reunite in itself dialectical and mythical power” (Deleuze 1990, p. 255). To what specific end? Ultimately, its objective is to lay down the conditions for characterizing the difference between two kinds of images and then the difference between their users, the one who knows (the philosopher) and the one who does not know (the sophist). The issue is thus simultaneously ontological and epistemological, but also a matter of engineering insofar as it is about shoring up the position of philosophy. And yet it is not straightforward, since according to Deleuze’s attentive reading, *both personae*—philosopher and sophist—are pretenders. One’s pretense, the philosopher’s, is grounded in resemblance, while the other’s is not (it is in fact not grounded or anchored at all). Plato is articulating two varieties of discursive currency and two kinds of discourses that use them, one that traffics in resemblances or copies, and another that simulates, projecting not echoes but mirages, not even a copy of a copy, just a shimmering delight (thereby in the first instance making a mockery of resemblances and thus of the truth). “If the simulacrum still has a model, it is another model, a model of the Other (l’Autre), from which there flows an internalized dissemblance... There is no

longer even right opinion, but rather a sort of ironic encounter which takes the place of a mode of knowledge, an art of encounter that is outside knowledge and opinion” (Deleuze 1990, p. 258). For Plato, this is philosophy’s nemesis. For Deleuze, that thought is not ambitious enough:

So “to reverse Platonism” means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm their rights among icons and copies... The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbors a positive power which denies *the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction*... It is not even enough to invoke a model of the Other, for no model can resist the vertigo of the simulacrum. There is no longer any privileged point of view except that of the object common to all points of view. There is no possible hierarchy, no second, no third... Resemblance subsists, but is produced as the external effect of the simulacrum... In the reversal of Platonism, resemblance is said of internalized difference, and identity of the Different as primary power... It is the triumph of the false pretender... But the false pretender cannot be called false in relation to a presupposed model of truth, no more than the simulation can be called an appearance or an illusion... It involves the false as power, *Pseudos*, in the sense in which Nietzsche speaks of the highest power of the false... Far from being a new foundation, it engulfs all foundations, it assures a universal breakdown... How would Socrates be recognized in these caverns, which are no longer his? With what thread, since the thread is lost? How would he exit from them, and how could he still distinguish himself from the Sophist? (Deleuze 1990, p. 262-61).

I will return to Plato’s cave shortly. For now, I will simply note that, if Deleuze is right in locating the logic that Nietzsche inspired him to find, the upshot of Plato’s technique of division is that it implodes, and the term to which it opposes itself in order to secure the position of philosophy overwhelms the entire system, images that are only images referring to nothing outside themselves undermining any efforts to fashion and reach solid ground. The philosophical upshot, that is, is that the very process of laying down the terms for distinguishing truth from its other (and philosophy from its other) sets up a logic that renders truth impossible. The system is breached and the double seems to have dissolved.

Aided by Deleuze's intervention (if you can believe him), Nietzsche's dream would thus seem to be achieved, the dream of reversing Plato and attaining terrain in which masks refer only to other masks. And yet a dream is itself always a double, even a philosopher's ambitious dream, Plato's and Nietzsche's dreams intertwining, constituting exotic twins in all of their fluid incompatibility.

Both Derrida and Deleuze direct fruitful, revealing attention to the effects of Plato's efforts *to use* the double and to some of the prominent ways the double eludes his control. Each accomplishes something unique, and yet their projects—both profoundly influenced by cues, clues, and strategies left behind by the ghost of Nietzsche—open up different problematics that nevertheless share a family resemblance. Derrida focuses on the fundamental indecidability established by Plato's decisions and to the insecurity it introduces into the text; this is one way, in shorthand (and referring back to an implicit thread of Derrida's text), of accounting for the death of Socrates. Deleuze depicts Plato's effort to preserve philosophy through deployment of a certain double as being one that mutates into an ontological Trojan horse, leading to a reversal that is in a certain sense beyond the traditional disjunction of security/insecurity since, indeed, it is the figurine of a horse with only shadow warriors hidden within. Against the backdrop of these exercises (French minus Nietzsche), I will now push forward and begin to intervene in Plato with a somewhat different emphasis on his reliance on the double and the way that it keeps open the very matters that it seems he would like to see closed.

*"The way up and down is one and the same."*⁹

Since before Plato, this deuced gesture or character has always haunted and eluded philosophy's efforts to force it into formal, fixed, and to varying degrees rigged configurations, which is why we will eventually find ourselves talking again about being and non-being (Sartre's continued devotion to this particular pair, just 2,500 years after Parmenides, is testimony to its power). To some scholars, Plato himself *seems* to have mastered the double. But Plato's attention to the double is not confined to his forms or his theories more generally but instead, one might surmise, either drives his thought or

is what his thought appears to drive toward. Part of the brilliance of Plato is the way he maintains a marked distance or harbors a certain reservoir of ambivalence or reluctance to take a stance, which, covered by his rhetorical virtuosity, is not always that conspicuous.

The most obvious starting point for a view of the double at work in Plato, the canonic divided line articulated by Socrates at the end of Book VI of the *Republic* is a curious phenomenon, broken up as the line is into not just two segments—the visible and the intelligible, a pair that will get repeated and further refined millennia later in Kant—but then each half subdivided again. The subdivision is clearly not unimportant, but part of its importance is that it helps soften or deflect attention from the basic division into two or maybe, more generally, it simply helps to complicate it, although on second thought this is not really a line but a division masquerading as a line. A somewhat idiosyncratic version of the very technique addressed by Deleuze, the gesture of division and then subdivision featured here is of course significant in its own right (one can only begin to imagine the sheer quantity of discourse this specific division has added to the accumulated sedimentations of western thought) as well as overtly relevant to Plato's relation to and parsing of the double, particularly given that it describes philosophy's opening assumptions not as "absolute beginnings"—good guesses then?—but as enabling philosophy "... to rise to that which requires no assumption and is the starting point of it all... making no use whatever of any object of sense but only of pure ideas..." (*Republic*, 511b-c.) If words are only echoes—"My words, like yours, are but an echo"¹⁰—and if echoes play off echoes, there's plenty of echolalic dissimulation already in play here.

All I will further state regarding the divided line is that while the back-to-back sequence may make it seem as if the line is something like an abstract rehearsal for the gritty narrative of the cave allegory that immediately follows it in Book VII, the thought of rehearsal is either a mirage, a ploy, or the consequence of an editing error, since there are massive disjunctions between the two sets of images, line and cave, particularly given that, unlike the former, the latter concludes not with an ascension into free space—the space free because, there, ideas would be unencumbered by the weight of

individuation—but with a convoluted descent to death, to anything but *the idea*, anything, that is, but the finest, most ethereal, possibly empty point of the line, a line that should probably be thought of first as vertical since the discussion of it immediately follows reference to the “power of the sun,” the ferocity and sometimes blinding materiality and thus arc of *directionality* of the sun perhaps compromising the abstract purity of the line, the line thought in terms of, “pure ideas moving on through ideas to ideas and ending with ideas” (511c). Put differently, while the articulation of the line seems to go up or face up, the story of the cave goes down, or at least its protagonist does.

Then again, some might dispute the thought that Plato’s line is all about transcendence. The real line has always been about the doubling enacted by following the eternally returning arc traced by the luminous path of Apollo; in this arc which is neither vertical nor horizontal, we are not reflections so much as beneficiaries, and the pious Plato cannot not have recognized the obvious.

With an openly acknowledged preference for intensifying the association of the sun with *power*—yes, this is a metaphor, a metaphor without which nothing would grow—I would really like someone to explain the connection between the sun and ideas. I’m not going to try to question a dead man, but returning to Derrida, it would appear that the very effort to transcend or detach from the power of metaphor is itself born of metaphor. If, that is, the sun is a metaphor at all. Maybe it turns out that Derrida is extraordinarily shrewd and insightful but also that he has an obsession with a specific configuration of the double that would distract and hinder him from considering the sense in which, distant though it might be, there is no “difference” between the sun above and, refracted through its warmth and through writing, the sun that extends itself into, illuminates, and complicates Plato’s text, maybe it’s all really refraction and translation. Or maybe there is no solarity as such, only the effects of the sun, including shadows (with this, Derrida might agree). Or: As above, so below. Time to go underground.

The outline of the story of the cave is familiar enough. But I'll restage aspects of it briefly here since I want not to offer an outline but to indicate fragments of a narrative that is riddled with doubles. First, though, and before entering, a minor excursus:

As is typically the case, this otherwise extraordinary cave has an *opening*, which is where I will enter the story, eccentrically. Insofar as it goes both ways—entrance/exit, exit/entrance, in and out, out and in, a pair that exists beyond or before symmetry—it is a central yet understated feature of the narrative, so let's linger there a moment at the threshold before entering the cave. For sake of an eidetic variation emphasizing doubles, and since Plato does not specify where this cave is, locate its opening not in Athens but in Rome, which city had such a deep and curious relation to Athens. If, then, this were not a Greek but instead a Roman cave (possibly the one in which Romulus and Remus were nursed by their lupine mother?), the opening would be the haunt of two-faced Janus, an overtly double deity with no Greek equivalent, god of gateways, keeper in this case of the passage between interior and exterior, variegated darkness and light, ensuring that neither aspect is granted priority, and that neither place is really dark, neither Athens nor Rome, neither interior or exterior. Plato would like to imagine the demarcation line positioned at this passage as simultaneously impermeable and permeable, and it is fortunate that Janus abides here since only a god could authorize and enable such an impossibility. The cave's opening is impermeable insofar as none of the cave's prisoners have breached it. At the same time, the opening is permeable since, in Plato's account, one of the cave's inhabitants must cross it, must, in fact, literally and fatally double cross it (he is compelled not only to leave but to return). This conflicting thread might seem weird, but it's just a story, one in which two-faced Janus is there making all conflicting or dissonant alternatives possible. One face eyeing the future, the other gazing at the past, Janus does not guard so much as conduits, conducts, or chaperones. For Romans, the opening of the cave might have signified wartime, since the doors to the temple of Janus were closed during times of peace.¹¹ In this case, Janus provides neither openings nor closings but *sees both sides* of either possibility, a case of double vision.

I begin my account of Plato's cave with Janus because while Plato could not have recognized Janus, he is clearly relying here on or at least benefitting from the god's powers. We pass the deity now as we enter.

Having just departed the divided line, Plato abruptly opens the cave allegory with the prisoners, who are "fettered from childhood" (514a), their heads held in place so they cannot turn and look at what is behind them, cannot see, for starters, the fire back there, nor the shadowmasters working the firelight, can see only the shadows that these bearers project on the only wall that the prisoners' fetters allow them to face, the wall on which play shadows of *shapes of things*, so that "... in every way such prisoners would deem reality to be nothing else than the shadows of the artificial objects" (515c). Plato thus offers us a double layer of images, the shadows on the wall and then the objects the outlines of which are used to create the shadows, things of "stone and wood and every material" which, degraded copies though they may be, paraded as they are before the fire by the imagists, have a kind of dual ontological status, being real insofar as they are material and yet also deriving a certain borrowed reality through their reference to real things.

This scenario is clearly intended to be an analogy, likely including regarding Athens itself. Here, though, I have nothing invested in speculating about or arguing in favor of what Plato intends, my discussion restricted to analogy only insofar as it relates to the play of the double.

"A strange image you speak of," said Glaucon, "and strange prisoners."

"Like ourselves, I said" (515c).

The last line is arguably the strangest sentence in this extended passage, and I will remark on it momentarily. Meanwhile, this would seem to be the fundamental setting of the drama about to unfold. However, before moving to that drama, we cannot help but pause and comment on two double-related exotica already in play, in play, that is, before the drama, exotica functioning thus not just as the drama's backdrop but as its conditioning terrain or subterrain, as the case may be:

First, since Plato keeps them in the deep marginal or shady side of the text, it is impossible to inquire into the identity of the shadowmasters, without whom, unless someone else does it, the fires would go unstoked and the prisoners would be in the

dark, presumably seeing *nothing*; unlike the prisoners, these toiling proles are not described as “like ourselves.” In fact, they are not really described at all except as object carriers who sometimes speak (signifying?), which means that they are as effectively concealed from us as they are from the prisoners. What have these shadowmasters seen, what do they say when they speak (what do they say when they speak to each other?), and why does Plato introduce them and then glide right over them, as if he were pretending to take them for granted? They themselves are necessarily *unfettered*—free?—since, were they in constraints, they would not be able to handle and manipulate things, nor would they be able to stoke the fires (who carries the firewood? is a question an aristocrat in a slave economy might have forgotten to ask). Conclude that the condition of the possibility of some people living in a world of delusion—more precisely, a world of shadows—is that there are others who do not, and this is a stronger move than, for instance, the truism that a contrary is necessary in order for something to be or to show itself (true needs false, light needs dark, etc., etc.). Two kinds of people? People or not (politicians’ tools, whomever), the shadowmasters are a force, and this second force is necessary in order to make the shadow world possible—in order to introduce some light into pitch black—and while Plato must relegate the shadowmasters to the shade, they themselves are not shadows, nor are they in the shadows that they make dance on the wall. Suffice it to note here that in this regard, the representation of the double is essential, i.e. the condition of perception (starting with pseudo-perception) is some second agency, even a super agency. Put in the terms of Plato’s story, a prison cannot function without its wardens. In this case, the wardens are barely visible, but the necessity of their eccentric presence seems to throw a bizarre skew into the mixture in advance, and one can only wonder if these shadowmasters are themselves familiar with Janus, wonder, that is, if they pass freely and without anxiety in and out of the cave, at least to fetch faggots, everything coming down to the power of not just light but the combustion upon which light is predicated. What is Plato driving toward?

Second, the prisoners are described not only as “strange” but as *like ourselves*. Does Plato mean to suggest that Socrates, being human, sees not things but only shadows of things, or that Plato wants the character of Socrates to imagine that about

himself or wants Socrates to make Glaucon imagine that? Is Plato insinuating that we are all like these strange prisoners? Could Plato himself possibly be like them, since he tells the story of both shadows and the sun, darkness and light? To contain these questions, I will simply flag this other double, the one comprised of the prisoners in the allegory and then those who are similar to them, including those telling the story about a world of fire and of shadows. Or at least that seems to be the case until the drama kicks in.

Reiterating what is familiar to us all, the action begins when one prisoner is freed from his constraints—do not ask who or what obscure force released him—freed into painful confusion at the sight of the fire and of the objects whose shadows is all he's known until now. Freedom immediately followed by a moment of perceptual mayhem and resistance to acknowledge new objects of perception, a moment of stubborn regression. Fine. Then he's dragged forcibly out of the cave (again, by what or whom?). Of course the sunlight hurts the former prisoner's eyes. And then his eyes adjust and he begins to see—in this order—shadows, reflections, things, the heavens, starlight, moonlight, and finally the sun itself. And he appreciates what he sees and pities those remaining below.

Several points before considering the double crossing, which is what the cave allegory might finally be all about (advanced not as a mere narrative flourish but as a philosophical necessity). First, Plato has now firmly established the necessity of a double world, one that, as previously noted, might in an obvious sense seem to illustrate the terms of the divided line. Except, reference back to Deleuze, it only simulates illustrating that other story, since the divided line winds up with ideas moving to ideas, and the protagonist of the cave allegory winds up basking in the same sun we all know, basking, that is, until he eventually returns to the cave. Neither whimsically nor arbitrarily, Plato has thus concocted a double world, governed by twinned forms of light, fire and sun: One aspect is the cave and the world it represents—human error would seem to be the point, but as I've already observed regarding the shadowmasters, it's more complicated than that—and the other aspect is the world graced by the sun, the real world. And the latter is the most curious thing of all. While the divided line leads to ideas moving to ideas, the cave allegory delivers *the world that we all live in*, provoking

us to ponder Plato's point. While the legacy of Platonism seems to steer us into considering that reality is anywhere but here, Plato himself delivers us into sunlight. Leaving us to wonder: Why the cave? Yet we must once again descend down into it.

Having seen the light, the former prisoner doubles back across the opening—why, we do not know, just that he is compelled, possibly needs to share—and he returns to his former abode, where he is mocked and scorned, and then probably killed... an odd reference, apparently, to Socrates. Finally, and exiting the cave story, Socrates sums up the allegory:

This image then, dear Glaucon, we must apply as a whole to all that has been said, likening the region revealed through sight to the habituation of the prison, and the light of the fire in it to the power of the sun. And if you assume that the ascent and the contemplation of the things above is the soul's ascension to the intelligible region, you will not miss my surmise, since that is what you desire to hear. But the god knows whether it is true (517b-c).

That last is a thoroughly ironic note, since of course 1) the god knows it cannot possibly be true, knows that Plato is a dissimulator and 2) Socrates' summary ends up on a penultimate high note, disconcertingly neglecting to mention the deadly descent that follows, which he himself has just described.

Plato insists on a double world—two kinds of illumination, fire and sun—but the only thing gained through the allegory is the very world that we live in, or, rather, the only thing gained is the troubling subterranean scenario that exists nowhere outside of Plato's *Republic*, which is to say that there never was a cave. The light the former prisoner has seen is not some special light—certainly not a transcendental illumination—but simply the same old sun we see every day.

In trying to pass itself off as an allegory, the story's image of enlightenment is simply a representation of this world and this same sun. Given Plato's efforts to spin his own tale, the cave story thus leaves a lingering sensation that one has just been subjected to a very fancy sleight of hand, advanced sophistry. Whether you buy the doubles the way that Plato presents them or not—forcing us to rely on peripheral vision—they've been lodged deep in us a long, long time.

Digging back into philosophy's flesh before Plato, the god of fire bequeaths us, "The sun is new each day,"¹² a thought that would seem to compromise the stability and ontological security of the sun represented in the narrative of the cave, thereby disrupting any advantage Plato thinks he's gained, although what Plato thinks doesn't matter since he's a dead man, will never think again, hasn't had a thought in eons, but will nevertheless continue to intrude so many lifetimes later, such is the power of writing. Plato is a dead man. In this case as in so many others, a dead man shadows us, a dead man is our double, or we his.

The Double in Love

Vladimir: To have lived is not enough for them.
Estragon: They have to talk about it.¹³

Plato's *Symposium* is consumed by love, or at least by talk about love, speeches that resonate directly with the convoluted epistemological and ontological motifs conjured up by the line and the cave. Again, I will not try to outline the dialogue, just to cite selective aspects of it relevant to the theme of the double (which theme Mr. Beckett understood in the most Spartan sort of way).

A story told second-hand in spades—Plato openly and repeatedly exercises the double—Socrates is atypically all dressed up when Aristodemus picks him up on the way to Agathon's party. But Socrates abruptly abandons Aristodemus right before arriving at Agathon's party, just stands onanistically lost in his own thoughts on a neighbor's porch, withholding the love.

Phaedrus begins the series of speeches about love, suggesting that Love is the "source of all our highest good" (178c), and he proceeds to provide a series of illustrations. Plato is warming us up.

Pausanias then takes over, initiating what will become the repeated intrusion of the double into the dialogue by observing that "If Love had a single nature, it would be all very well, but not as it is, since Love is not single..." (180c). Love is not single, he says, because there are two goddesses of love, the heavenly Aphrodite and the earthly Aphrodite (180d-e). Involving both the male and the female, the younger, earthly Aphrodite is associated with the common or popular love, something physical and

unintelligent, operating in the realm of chance. The older, heavenly Aphrodite not only *has no mother* but also no female aspect, inspiring the love of men for other men, with discipline and decency (with that is, what Foucault focused on under the auspices of “care”¹⁴). In fact, Pausanius suggests, Athens’ institutions regarding the love of men for men are superior to those of other peoples (including the Persians, who he claims condemn homosexuality), and he goes on to describe what is considered appropriate behavior regarding such relations, observing along the way that “... to yield to a worthy man in a right way is right” (S 183d). Pausanius concludes with the thought that “All other forms of love belong to the other goddess, the common Aphrodite” (S 186a). This is the first division of love in the dialogue, Aphrodite gone double, turned twin although anything but identical.

It’s Aristophanes’ turn next, but he defers instead to Eryximachus. Pausanius was right to distinguish between two kinds of love, says he, but thinks that heavenly love is not just about male to male relations but, moving to a more abstract and thus overtly philosophical level, relations to “many other objects and spheres of action,” and he includes direct reference to Heraclitus, who “speaks of a unity which agrees with itself by being at variance, as in the stringing of a bow or lyre” (S 187d), noting that “it is possible to harmonize what is in discord and disagreement.” Love is again represented as split, a motif that will continue to attend manifestations of the double.

Now Aristophanes complicates things further with the observation that “In the first place there were three sexes, not, as with us, two, male and female; the third partook of the nature of both the others and has vanished, though its name survives” (S 189d). Now this might sound like recourse to the third rather than the double, and in a literal sense of course it is. However, it is at the same time more complex than that since the hermaphrodite, a being with two faces and two sets of sexual organs and “everything else to correspond” (S 189e-190a) was itself a double creature. The gods themselves were perplexed about how to resolve this situation, until Zeus decided to cut the hermaphrodite into two. “Man’s original body having been thus cut in two, each half yearned for the half from which it had been severed” (S 191a), and Aristophanes has thus immeasurably complicated Pausanius’ discourse, apparently discarding the divine Aphroditic double and leading back to the double associated with heterosexual desire

(before then touching back on the theme of homosexual desire on the part of both sexes). The fate of humans, then, is to live out a split in the form of “longing which it cannot express, but can only surmise and obscurely hint at” (S 192c). Thought a certain way, the primordial hermaphrodite represented in Aristophanes’ account of love is not a third but an originary double, the cleavage of which leads to the desire on the part of both sexes to recover from the division, “returning to our original condition” (S 193c), sexual intercourse the kinetic placeholder for that originary state, a state which is doubly originary given that it is fundamentally about reproduction, homosexuality temporarily closeted from the dialogue.

In the wake of Aristophanes’ deep double, Agathon shifts the focus, declaiming a turn from the blessings of love granted by the gods to the gods themselves, an extended praise of, well, not only the gods but... the blessings of love, his words “the best medley that I can contrive” (S 197e). It is a lovely exercise in poetics, but not very philosophical, and not one that features much in the way of a double other than the ambiguous distinction between love’s source and its effects, the distinction between which Agathon seems to plunge into obscurity.

Then it is Socrates’s turn, and he sets out by suggesting that the previous speeches have established a precedent that he cannot repeat, although of course his message is characteristically loaded, embodying true love—philosophy, love of wisdom—intimating that so far, his comrades have provided only “the appearance of praising Love... That is why I imagine you rake up stories of every kind and ascribe the credit of them to Love... “ (S 198e).

Mere appearance, scattershot speeches. Ouch!

Agathon is apparently Socrates’ immediate target, and Socrates begins questioning him: “Now try to tell me whether Love means love of something, or whether there can be Love which is love of nothing” (199e). Socrates’ point is a remarkably modern encounter with, ultimately, the concept of “essence,” and he seems to harbor a deeply phenomenological streak here, asserting what millenia later will in the hands of Husserl become the noetic-noematic relation—stated simply, “consciousness is consciousness of”—a late echo of Socrates’ suggestion here that “... Love is love of” (199e). Except that if Socrates is a phenomenologist, he sounds very Sartrean, since

he deems it “certain” that what one loves—or desires—is what one lacks. All this, it seems, in order to expose Agathon’s ignorance. But then comes the Diotima story, a story (Diotima’s) within a story (Socrates’) within a story (Aristodemus’) within a story (Apollodorus’), the entire dialogue packaged second hand, its origin at an radical remove. Socrates offers Diotima in the service of getting at not the mere appearance but, he suggests, the essential nature of Love, which nevertheless continues to elude the dialogue, and largely because of the exercise of the technique of division, this time, finally, a division between love of physical beauty and love of the beautiful soul, a division both illustrated and yet also complicated by the later appearance of the most lovely Alcibiades.

Embodying a heterosexual dynamic in the homoerotic setting of the *Symposium*, the exchange between Diotima and Socrates starts with a simple opposition that does not really qualify as a double, and it is Socrates’ typical default posture, quite routine, really not very interesting; what is not beautiful is ugly, what is not wise is ignorant (202a), etc.. This is Socrates’ stance but possibly not Plato’s since Diotima questions the disjunction, leading to the thought that Love is “half-way between mortal and immortal,” the function of which is “To interpret and convey messages to the gods from men and to men from the gods...” (202e), the condition of Love’s capacity to carry messages being a double identity, but more specifically a double that “prevents the universe from falling into separate halves.” “What [Love] wins he always loses, and is neither rich nor poor, neither wise nor ignorant” (203e).

Socrates then steers Diotima straight to philosophy, asking, who is a lover of wisdom if people are neither wise nor ignorant? Diotima responds, “Wisdom is one of the most beautiful of things, and Love is love of beauty, so it follows that Love must be a lover of wisdom, and consequently in a state half-way between wisdom and ignorance” (204b), thereby endowing the philosopher with the same double-identity as love itself, a double elision clinched when Diotima slyly substitutes “beauty” with “good,” which in Diotima’s account finally comes down to a desire for immortality (207a), Plato thus again prefiguring Sartre centuries in advance: “... It is in order to secure immortality that each individual is haunted by this eager desire and love” (208b), Diotima thereby laying the groundwork for an image of ascent—from love of physical beauty to love of

the beautiful soul—that gets repeated throughout Plato’s writings, including of course in the line and the cave, ascent founded upon a doubling, in this case the relatively simple bifurcation of body and soul, a simplicity breached by the impossible desire to be god.

Then there’s commotion outside the party, drunken revelers, a flute-girl, and Alcibiades makes his entrance, and with him enters not just lovely speeches about love but actual love relations, complicating precisely what’s just been sorted out, the distinction between body and soul, complication or possibly oblique illustration.

Obliged to offer his own speech on love, Alcibiades says that he will make a speech in praise of Socrates, Socrates thus serving as a stand-in or double for love. Intensifying the deployment of the double, Alcibiades says that he will praise Socrates by use of similes (215a), i.e. by a form of undisguisedly indirect discourse (but a form of discourse frequently exercised by the avowedly straight-talking Socrates himself). And he does begin with simile: Socrates, says Alcibiades, is like a clay figurine of Dionysus’ companion, Silenus, playing a seductive pipe, a clay figurine filled with little gods. Then he rapidly turns his rhetorical attention not to Socrates but to the effects that Socrates’ words have on him, words that force him to realize that “I am still a mass of imperfections and yet persistently neglect my own true interests” (216a).

This is all preface to Alcibiades’ description of the night he failed to seduce Socrates: “I swear by all the gods in heaven,” he says, “that for anything that had happened between us when I got up after sleeping with Socrates, I might have been sleeping with my father or elder brother” (219d). The non-encounter’s impact on Alcibiades is dual. On the one hand, he feels sleighted at having been spurned. On the other hand, however, “I felt a reverence for Socrates’ character, his self-control and courage” (219d), the consequence of which was that “I was utterly disconcerted, and wandered about in a state of enslavement to the man the like of which has never been known” (219e).

After then painting an admiring and quite specific account of Socrates’ comportment in war, he then echoes the Diotima story of ascent by observing that “our friend here is so extraordinary, both in his person and in his conversation, that you will never be able to find anyone remotely resembling him either in antiquity or in the present generation, unless you go beyond humanity altogether” (221d), which loops

back to the previous reference to Silenus and to satyrs, a convoluted reference not to immortality per se but to something more than human. Or maybe there is something immortal about Socrates, a thought that might be obvious to us now 2,400 years later, but which might already have been clear to Alcibiades.

General speeches in praise of love have been displaced by specific praise of Socrates, a curious turn of events. The dialogue and the party continue, concluding when Aristodemus wakes up the following morning to discover that the only people still awake not to mention still drinking are Agathon, Aristophanes, and Socrates, and that Socrates continues pontificating, arguing that someone who writes comedy could also write tragedy and vice versa (223d), a strange, theatrical double—smile and frown—on which to conclude a conversation in praise of love.

The dialogue itself is neither comedy nor tragedy, but it is not entirely clear where the philosophy is happening in it, either, unless Diotima's image of ascent from the love of beautiful bodies to the love of beautiful souls and the associated desire for immortality are transferred to *embodiment* in the Socrates represented by Alcibiades. If so, and given that in Socrates' own telling Diotima stands in his place and thus relieves him of substantial commitment to anything he says, a lingering question remains: Is the philosopher simply an image of the philosopher, a story within a story? Whatever else it is, Plato's *Symposium* is saturated by a myriad of substitutions and doubles.

*"The sophist runs away into the darkness of non-being..."*¹⁵

One conspicuous oddity that emerges at the opening of Plato's *Sophist* is that the central character is *the Stranger* from Elea, described by Theodorus at the outset as a follower of Parmenides and Zeno and as a "real philosopher" (216a). If linked to a constellation of archetypes, this character might as well be as real as the stranger who rides into town in so many country songs that he constitutes a relatively distinct subgenre. With loaded reference to another balladeer, Homer, the young Socrates then muses or musics that maybe this philosopher is not a mere stranger but a god, a god, specifically, of refutation, a god, then, of denial and, by implication, negativity, possibly a god of the void (216b). Not a devotee of disputation, replies Theodorus—not thus a gamester or a sophist or a nihilist—and also not a god. Certainly, though, divine, as is

the case of any philosopher (216c). To which Socrates responds that it is not much easier to recognize a philosopher than it is a god (216c), to which I will add a god or a ghost; here, Plato has already linked the identity of the philosopher to the obscure operations of the double.

The opening stretch of the dialogue works toward making not the philosopher but the sophist recognizable, although despite the interlocutors' best efforts, the sophist never actually appears in the dialogue, instead just skulks around the dialogue's edges. This first stretch rides on a sequence of not just distinctions but more specifically crisp divisions into two, e.g. two kinds of hunting, two kinds of fighting, two kinds of persuasion, two kinds of controversy, two kinds of purification, two kinds of evil, two kinds of vice, and two kinds of ignorance; these reductive doubles are relatively transparent and predictable and thus not as philosophically interesting as others in play in this dialogue. But then we encounter two kinds of instruction leading to the difference between those who are cross-questioned and those who are not, which prompts the Stranger to remark that "... a wolf is very like a dog" (231a), a move into different terrain since it is more about camouflage in motion than it is about a typically tame or static distinction between appearance and reality.

Images of entities in motion are often tender spots in the corpus of Plato. So pause a moment over this new inscription of the double, which is more than just another note in a pattern since it introduces a truly variant configuration, the first one here that's totemized rather than abstract: Is the sophist a wolf or a dog? And what about the philosopher? Dog's an image of something that could be cast as a human companion, maybe thus a surrogate human (or perhaps something simply servile). The wolf, though; a stalker, maybe a predator poised to take down Nietzsche's lamb.

At this point in the dialogue, it's observed that "... the sophist has by this time appeared to be so many things that I am at a loss to know what in the world to say he really is..." (231c). It's not so much that the sophist eludes the philosopher but that the Stranger's dominating double analysis seems for now to have pushed the sophist a bit beyond reach. But only briefly, since it finally comes down to the familiar but hardly innocent distinction between mere opinion and true knowledge (233c). Which means that it comes down to the difference between people who think they know and... Well,

the truth is that the alternative—the identity of the philosopher, the one who believes he knows—remains totally opaque.

Now, the Stranger and Theatetus become the hunters who do not want “to let the beast get away again” (235b). So it’s a return to hunting, to tracking and stalking, that and more specifically to Plato’s desire to encircle the sophist with nets, a desire imagined by means of divisions of imitative art. “We must follow him,” states the Stranger,” always dividing the section into which he has retreated, until he is caught” (235c), philosophy on the drive, moving in for the kill. Back on secure territory, then, back, that is, to a method of division, this time a division regarding the two classes of imitation determined by the difference between, on the one hand, likeness or resemblance and, on the other hand, mere appearance (the difference between these fueled Deleuze’s reversal of Plato).

An apparently clear distinction, but still, and getting to the real point, the Stranger is uncertain into which of these categories the sophist should be placed: “... in the cleverest manner he has withdrawn into a baffling classification where it is hard to track him” (236d). And here is where the other central theme of the dialogue is introduced. Isn’t it a contradiction to say that a falsehood—a form of non-being—exists? (237a). On the one hand, we have an ontological issue in play here, which revolves around the question of whether or not the designation “non-being” can be applied to anything, this with profound epistemological ramifications, namely the possibility of affirming that false statements exist. But if taken as an existential issue, “non-being” could mean being dead. By extension, this could open up the possibility that the sophist does not exist. Which then leads to the question, what about the philosopher or anyone else when they say something false? “To speak of what is not ‘something’ is to speak of nothing at all,” says the Stranger (237e). “In such a case, a person is saying something, though he may be speaking of nothing.”

The dialogue continues to characterize the sophist in a familiar way—the sophist is an illusionist, a juggler, and other *ad hominem*s (241b)—but Plato knows that he has not encircled the sophist, maybe because how can you net a man who is possibly already dead, even if the security of the philosopher’s identity would seem to depend on defining its other? At this point then, and precisely because the sophist continues to

elude them, the dialogue turns from the sophist to what different philosophers say about the status of non-being in relation to being. The Stranger makes some bizarre feints before finally invoking and reconfiguring the theme of the double in what might be described as an ontologically intensive way: "Then don't let anyone say that it is the contrary of the existent that we mean by 'what is not,' when we venture to say that 'what is not' exists" (258e). Both epistemological and ontological, this confident declaration imagines a double whose elements are theoretically distinguishable but not simply oppositionalized and in so doing it shatters the line between non-being and being, between, that is, death and life, a complication that will carry over into the kinds of hauntings that permeate later existentialisms, a world in which the dead sometimes shadow the living. In Plato's dialogue, this passes as a secure position, one that will pretend to drive the remainder of the exchange. However, and even couched in the language of logical discourse, acknowledging the non-being in being or the death in life is a bold and bleak move. The dialogue continues, but the ontological damage has been done, and the sophist slips away under the cover of the Stranger's pose of certainty that he has caged a chimera, who still stalks us today. If "furtive presence" is a philosophical oxymoron, that's a good way of indicating both the sophist's appearance in the dialogue and the existential impulses at work in so many visages of the double, which itself is ontological. One might push that claim and suggest that ontology is the thought of the double.

The double is a furtive presence. This fundamental thought will animate the chapters to follow. Meanwhile, I turn to Kant.

*Repetition with a Difference*¹⁶

Having observed some of the philosophical drama of Plato's dependence on and idiosyncratic encounters with the double (and acknowledging my own idiosyncratic, partial selection of his encounters), I would like to fast forward to some episodes in Kant. An analysis confined to the general concept of dichotomies or the more specific model of hierarchized binary oppositions might in certain obvious respects indicate that Kant's deployment of the double resonates with and essentially repeats Plato's; Nietzsche's quasi-comic-strip thought is that the history of an error entails a

climatological and geographical aspect, becoming more refined, stripped down, exposed, and probably increasingly absurd as the error moves north from Athens to Königsberg. However, the double is not just an error, and Kant's deployment or encounter is in fact utterly different from Plato's (and, for the record, Nietzsche of course knows this).

For the most part, and as illustrated by the line and, differently, the cave, Plato *seems* inexorably drawn to the image of ascent from one domain of reality to the other, an image reinforced by Diotima's thought of immortality but complicated by Aristophanes's story, as is the elusiveness of the sophist—and by extension the elusiveness of the philosopher's identity—who seems to thwart Plato's desires (Plato is not so conclusive or secure as Platonism might make him appear). For Kant, however, there is a chasmic divide between the two general regions of his metaphysics, and it is as if philosophy is obliged to inhabit ontologically simultaneous or parallel universes, which are fundamentally, mutually disjointed.

Kant's "Copernican Revolution" might most succinctly and quite accurately be characterized as an insistence on the necessity of a double analysis. In order to avoid getting bogged down in technicalities—this is not about Kant but about his exercise of the double—I'll revisit his philosophical move with reference to passages from the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* before touching on his *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*.

Today, philosophers are accustomed to please people by serving up a vague mixture of the empirical and the rational.

Kant¹⁷

... We can already identify a struggle on two fronts: against empiricism and against dogmatic rationalism.

Deleuze, on Kant¹⁸

Thought from a certain angle, it might appear that these two statements are at odds with each other, one the critical observation of a confusing mess, the other denoting an Enlightenment battle. However, the statements actually form a pair, and

together they succinctly express the full spectrum of Kant's concerns regarding the infirmities of modern philosophy.

On the one hand, some philosophers crank out conceptual sludge, treating philosophy's resources as a mish-mash, and thereby obliterating a massive domain of distinctions, a domain dominated by the most important distinction of all. Kant cites no specific personages in this passage, so while he no doubt has particular individuals in mind, we might imagine this as perhaps a caricature of salon philosophers (whom Plato would have decried as sophists). But Kant is not merely posturing and his point rapidly becomes clear; the bottom line is that empiricism—the domain of anthropology but not pure philosophy—inevitably compromises and darkens exercises in illumination since its uneven particularities and mechanics (including animal mechanics) undermine the prospects for establishing general, universal *principles*, a point graphically illustrated by the uncontrollable intrusion of empirically driven self-interest, the intrusion of “the dear self” when trying to hammer out a metaphysics of morals. Equally so, dogmatic rationalism leaves the world behind. Without peer in his clarity, precision, and ambition, Kant understands, accepts, and tries to take account of everything.

On the other hand, and as Kant makes clear in his metaphysical and epistemological works, staking exclusive claim either to empiricism or to its apparent contrary, rationalism—take your pick, go with the utterly ungrounded, dogmatic contingencies of your preference—generates equally inevitable antinomies from which there is no escape, just philosophical oscillation, a scape that reveals the ultimately arbitrary nature of siding with either route, low road or high (there is no road in between, and there is no divided line establishing a connection!). Abandoning the terms of Plato's ascent, embracing one and forsaking the other is a case of myopic commitment, synonymous with gambling on an unfounded assumption. And—spark turned to light unimagined by Plato—this observation begets Kant's Copernican Revolution, which hinges on the transcendental move.

I will assume familiarity with the maneuvers by which Kant articulates and establishes the categorical imperative, which functions by means of, first, distinguishing between laws of nature and laws of freedom; this distinction is the opening, determinative double in the *Groundwork*. If there is such a thing as morality, observes

Kant, it must be associated with a force—the force of ontological necessity—as inexorable as the force associated with laws of nature. Given the inescapable confusion that attends any consideration of everyday life, saturated as it is with contingencies and mixed motivations, Kant insists that only by purging philosophical analysis of anything empirical can we discover the fundamental conditions of morality; he does not ignore the empirical, just filters it out and sets it aside. The crucial outcome of his analysis is the wedding of necessity with freedom. Which is to say that it is by understanding the structures associated with freedom that we can reveal the nature of moral experience. The particularities and ensuing certainties of this project occupy the First and Second section of the text.

The Third Section, *Going from the Metaphysics of Morals to a Critique of Pure Practical Reason*, is a different story. While Kant's focus here is on autonomy, he notes along the way—a relatively abrupt disruption in his discourse, a detour—that, “It may seem as though, in the idea of freedom, we have actually presupposed the moral law, the principle of the autonomy of the will itself, as though we could give no proof of its reality and its objective necessity on its own” (Kant 2003, 63), and then he notes “We see a kind of circle from which, it seems, we cannot escape... ” That Kant acknowledges the threatening possibility that he has built his entire analysis on a presupposition (assumptions are a dime a dozen, why this one rather than that?) is a sign of both his rigor and his candor. But that he then proceeds to propose a resolution is a sign of his ambition: “However,” he writes, “there is a way out... a division, however crude it may be, between *the world of the senses* and *the world of the mind*” (Kant 2003, 64-65).

Now, to an inattentive generalist—a lazy reader of the history of philosophy, one perhaps driven by the desire to turn everything into metaphysics, i.e. to generalize the particular—this might sound familiar, might, that is, sound like the same story we get if not from the mesmerizing confusions of the cave allegory then, more clearly or conspicuously, from Plato's divided line. But Kant's is a different story from Plato's, a different double. Plato seems to have ontological favorites. But Kant—German, scientific—is neutral. Which in this instance means capable of articulating and sustaining a double vision. So he writes:

Thus, to the degree that we have constructed our self-image by means of our awareness and sensations, we must be regarded as belonging to the *world of the senses*; yet, to the degree that all this comes down to our unmediated activity (not affected by the senses but arising directly from our consciousness) we must regard ourselves as belonging to *the world of the mind*, although we can get no farther into it than this. (Kant 2003, 65)

The last clause is important, since it signals his phenomenology, which I will address momentarily. Before that, though, I will let him finish his thought:

First, insofar as we belong to the world of sensation, we see ourselves as subject to the laws of nature (of *heteronomy*). *Second*, we see ourselves belonging to the intelligible world, subject to laws that are independent of nature, not empirical but grounded in reason alone... This, in turn, is the ground of all actions of *rational* beings, just as natural law is the basis of all things appearing in nature. (Kant 2003, 66)

First, second: A twinned recognition signaling the action of the Kantian double. What is most phenomenological is that he is no longer making arguments in a typical fashion but is rather simply engaged in descriptive acts of recognition. Plato's gaze was turned outwards, and so for him, philosophy is fundamentally about seeing the light. But for Kant it is all about not just seeing, but about seeing ourselves, and about the necessity of seeing ourselves from different perspectives, Kant insisting that we view reality from this angle and then from the other, always there will be an other. To reinforce a linkage to later phenomenologies (to Husserl and his descendents), a linkage directly relevant to the motif of the double, what Kant is engaged in methodologically is a formalist exercise in eidetic variation, one that pivots around the observation that we look at the subject from an intrinsically double perspective, one that can be traced back in this text to the distinction between laws of nature and laws of freedom. Looking at the subject from an empirical standpoint yields one set of structures. Looking at the subject from a rational standpoint—what will parlay into the transcendental move—yields an entirely, radically different set of structures. Without acknowledging the reality and necessity of both perspectives (and the reality of their simultaneous separation and relation), philosophy will remain mired in an endless squabble of dualing ideologies. Like Janus,

philosophy must have its gaze facing two directions simultaneously. And this is as true for metaphysics and epistemology as it is for ethics.

The Temptations of Reason

His papers always in impeccable order, Kant seems so philosophically fastidious, so German, that it might seem hard to imagine him as anything but in complete command of his deployment of the double, a command seemingly confirmed by the double analysis that provides the armature for the entirety of the *Groundwork*. Yet in the *Prolegomena*—as in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, which the *Prolegomena* was written to outline and defend—we see the wild side of Kant, or the wild side not shown but indicated by the Kantian double, half of which is knowable domain, the other half ontologically blockaded by the limits of reason.

Prominent deuces drive Kant's critical philosophy, divisions and pairs in all their modern visages barely akin to Plato's, any distant kinship undergirded not by the content but simply by the appearance of some crucial divisions originally introduced in *The Critique*: analytic & synthetic judgements, *a posteriori* & *a priori* judgements are the most conspicuous sets, recombinations of which also always appear in configurations of two. Synthetic *a priori* judgements are of course Kant's key to metaphysics since they provide the basis for understanding the structures provided by pure reason, i.e. they are the condition for the possibility of the order of experience, for the representation of a coherent world. Regarding metaphysics, the synthetic *a priori* is the magical combination and the basis for universal principles, which cash out into such irrevocable observations as "'substance is permanent' and 'every event is determined by a cause according to constant laws,' etc."¹⁹ The philosophical punchline, of course—Kant's central insight—is that, "*The understanding does not derive its laws (a priori) from, but prescribes them to nature*" (Kant, 2001, 58). I revisit this fundamental point only to make it fresh. The division sets that lead to this punchline function as critical tools, and Kant completely confident about his mastery of them.

Written partly out of frustration at the reception of *The First Critique*, Kant's motivation in this text is itself dual. First, he aims to establish the conditions for the possibility of metaphysics. Second, and in so doing, he wants to demarcate the limits of

reason.²⁰ The latter point brings us to the ultimate dyad, the distinction and relation between phenomena and noumena (which may be translated into the difference between things as we experience them and things as they are in-themselves). While this weighty deuce has profound epistemological implications, it is itself not ultimately not epistemological but ontological, which observation reinforces Kant's relevance to my general orientation regarding the problem of the double. Here are some high points of how this plays out in the text:

“Experience therefore can never teach us the nature of things in themselves” (Kant 2001, 35). This is the linchpin of Kant's core insight and thus entire system. *A priori* principles provide the conditions for all possible experience, but experience is by definition experience of *phenomena*. Thus “... the question is not how things in themselves but how the cognition of things is determined... Hence if the pure concepts of the understanding try to go beyond objects of experience and be referred to things in themselves (*noumena*), they have no meaning whatsoever” (Kant 2001, 50-51). Yet the understanding does try to reach beyond experience and thus needs to be disciplined by philosophy in order to remain vigilant about its limits, even if, ironically, it is philosophy that perhaps sets up the terms of the understanding's inclination to overreach:

Since the oldest days of philosophy, inquirers into pure reason have thought that, besides the things of sense, or appearances (*phenomena*), which make up the sensible world, there are certain beings of the understanding (*noumena*), which should constitute the intelligible world... And we indeed, rightly considering objects of sense as mere appearances, confess thereby that they are based upon a thing in itself, though we know not this thing... The understanding, therefore, by assuming appearances, grants also the existence of things in themselves... (Kant 2001, 53)

And it is in this very assumption of noumenality that the understanding sets itself up for danger, since “There is indeed something seductive in our pure concepts of the understanding which tempts us to a transcendent use—a use which transcends all possible experience” (Kant 2001, 53). Something seductive and tempting; we shall see throughout this extended exercise, these are marks of the double. Thus, “The imagination may perhaps be forgiven for occasional vagaries and for not keeping

carefully within the limits of experience... But the understanding which ought to think can never be forgiven for indulging in vagaries; for we depend on it alone for assistance to set bounds, when necessary, to the vagaries of the imagination” (Kant 2001, 55). Imagination, forgiven. Understanding, chastised since it operates under an epistemological imperative and has a job to do. And Kant offers advice regarding the means for maintaining discipline: “Since all illusion consists in holding the subjective ground of our judgments to be objective, a self-knowledge of pure reason in its transcendent (hyperbolic) use is the only safeguard against the aberrations into which reasons falls when it mistakes its destination...” (Kant 2001, 65).

Finally, unless someone is not really listening to this consistent thread, the terms of which are thoroughly familiar to anyone who has read *The First Critique*, Kant does not give up, but brings the force of his arguments to a head in offering: “The clearest arguments having been adduced, it would be absurd for us to hope that we can know more of any object than belongs to the possible experience of it... But it would be, on the other hand, a still greater absurdity if we conceded no things in themselves or declared our experience to be the only possible mode of knowing things... “ (Kant 2001, 83).

From the broader standpoint of the problematic of the double, what is most significant here is that while Kant understands part of his job as determining the length of philosophy’s leash and reminding philosophy to stay on it, there is a *noumenal* domain, which is not a place but a transcendental profile of reality. The imagination, however, is endlessly tempted to imagine it as a place, and to go there by saying something about it. Inhabited as it is by an overt longing for that which is ontologically inaccessible and unobtainable, the imagination wants to say things it cannot say, wants to speak about things regarding which, by definition, it knows nothing.

The double is here doubly sealed. On the one hand, Kant has delineated the limits of understanding. In the very same stroke, he has if not confirmed at least acknowledged the possibility of *noumena* while at the same time letting the the *noumenal* realm go. Reality is fractured by a chasm, on the edge of which Nietzsche will perform his untimely dance.

At this juncture, it is worth pausing to observe that, as it transpires, Kant has two doubles. Plato, of course, since while he and Kant are related they cannot be conflated. Then there is Nietzsche, who believes that he has extricated himself from Kant but who cannot dissociate himself from the move to possibility conditions, and who has radically muddied the Heraclitean waters of ontology by insisting on the specificity of formations of subjectivity while committed to intoxicated, universalizing claims about the will to power.

Words and Things

In strange ways even more resonant with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* than is his *The Archaeology of Knowledge*,²¹ Foucault's *The Order of Things*²² is a brilliantly dry yet paradoxically scintillating archaeology of a massive mutation that occurs within the human sciences, an account of a certain staging on which appears a new object of inquiry, the human subject. Chapter 9 is entitled "Man and His Doubles," and it would be a missed opportunity were I to avoid a touching on the message of this chapter as a transition between Kant's double and the world of confusion that follows (the world that will occupy the remainder of this book devoted to the double).

At this late stage in the book, Foucault has spent several hundred pages digging up and documenting the massive historical shift between the "classical" and the modern periods, one marked by the dramatic entrance of the figure of the human subject onto the epistemological stage, "Man"—the human subject—now the central character of a problematic taken an anthropological turn. The grid of Foucault's narrative is itself a certain sort of double, featured by the Nietzschean-inspired contrast²³ between, on the one hand, the classical period, which Foucault associates with the European discursive formation that appears after the Renaissance and extends until mid- to late-eighteenth century, and, on the other hand, the modern period, which Foucault understands as the historical backdrop to where we are now, perhaps from which we are only now beginning to emerge.

The specific discursive shift and contrast tracked by Foucault begins with the clarity embodied by Kant, who, as we have just recounted, draws a lucid line while insisting that the understanding—in the face of what I will call an *existential* longing to

exceed the limits or rational propriety—retain clarity about itself, i.e. about the realm of possible experience. In the most general sense an echo of Plato's divisions, Kant's thought pivots around the line and its maintenance (cf. Foucault 1994, 341). But what follows Kant is not the maintenance of the line but a discursive mutation expressed in the emergence of what Foucault calls "the strange empirico-transcendental doublet" (Foucault 1994, 318), not a division but a new, specific confusion, as nature and human nature become indissociable, coextensive fields. For Kant, and sticking to this side of the divide, the empirical is the realm of "common sense" and of that which is most familiar, like the body of a machine, relatively unproblematic from a philosophical visage. Yet according to Foucault's ambitious reading, the dynamics of the empirico-transcendental doublet shift rapidly and dramatically, and soon after Kant, under the auspices of the complications introduced by the anthropological move, the empirical becomes associated with "the unthought" (Foucault 1994, 325); the creature understands itself as a hybrid, fundamentally dual system, knows itself as an animal also, but cannot penetrate its own animality, even as it "articulates itself upon it" (Foucault 1994, 325).

The unthought (whatever name we give it) is not lodged in man like a shriveled-up nature or a stratified history; it is, in relation to man, the Other: the Other that is not only a brother but a twin, born, not of man, nor in man, but beside him and at the same time, in an identical newness, in an unavoidable duality... Though this double may be close, it is alien, and the role, the true undertaking, of thought will be to bring it as close as possible: the whole of modern thought is imbued with the necessity of thinking the unthought... of becoming absorbed in its silence, or of straining to catch its endless murmur (Foucault 1994, 327).

Here, as we stumble into an Other described as brother, twin, yet alien, we may seem to be looping straight back to Foucault's nemesis, Sartre. But Sartre is only the expression of an ontological dynamic working itself out in time. And Foucault, who knows that Sartre's first published essay was on Nietzsche, knows Nietzsche and knows that something is working itself out in "history"—in time, in life—and it is not a so-called dialectic, not a pseudo-double pitched toward resolution in some imaginary third. The subject is tracked by ghosts, including the one that eluded Plato's Stranger.

Wild Double

While it would be a blunder or *faux pas* to suggest that the contrary is true, the entire history of philosophy has been subtended and driven by the multifarious, shape-shifting figure of the double; while the double both haunts and harbors hauntings within, it itself is not haunted by philosophy. Coming before philosophy and exceeding philosophy's desire to tame it—both Plato and Kant seem infused with that desire, but there is a profound sense in which both finally avoid trying to tame it—the double is not confined to dualisms, disjunctions, or hierarchized binary oppositions but in its wilder manifestations appears in the form of obscure twinings and hauntings, uncanny ingeminations, strange, often shady substitutions, oneiric images, Doppelgängers, and elliptical couplings and conjunctions that tend to render the standard-issue conceptual apparatuses introduced and offered by tradition inadequate, unstable, and frequently frustrating if not ultimately futile. The apparatuses addressed in following sections may be part of that tradition, but cannot be considered standard-issue.

ENDNOTES

¹ “I, Plato, am the Truth,” Nietzsche, “How the True World Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error,” in *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Tracy Strong (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

² Plato, *Cratylus*, 407b.

³ As will become clear in later chapters in this book, the philosophical double, itself admitting of great variation, is not the same as the wild double, which also has seemingly countless forms.

⁴ Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956).

⁵ Cf. Derrida, Jacques, “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 258.

⁶ Derrida, Jacques, “Plato’s Pharmacy,” in *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

⁷ Cf. Vernant.

⁸ Deleuze, Gilles, “Plato and the Simulacrum,” in *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, ed. Constantine V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 253.

⁹ Heraclitus of Ephesus, in Freeman, Kathleen, trans., *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 29.

¹⁰ Plato, *Gorgias*, line 482a.

¹¹ After his defeat of Antony and annexation of Egypt, Octavian made a show of closing the temple doors, signifying that he represented peace for Rome. Cf. Everitt, Anthony, *Augustus: The Life of Rome’s First Emperor* (New York: Random House, 2006), p. 198.

¹² Heraclitus (1996), p. 25.

¹³ Beckett, Samuel, *Waiting for Godot*, trans. Samuel Beckett (New York: Grove Press, 1982). This is one of the most elegant articulations of the double in modern literature.

¹⁴ Foucault, Michel, *The Care of the Self*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1986).

¹⁵ Plato, *Theaetetus-Sophist*, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), line 254A.

¹⁶ This phrase is Deleuze’s rendering of Nietzsche’s notion of eternal return. Cf. Deleuze, Gilles, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), the book that when originally published in 1962 reinvigorated not the study so much as

the active use of Nietzsche in contemporary philosophy, arguably Deleuze's most lasting contribution to the history of philosophy.

¹⁷ Kant, Immanuel, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Kant's Foundation of Ethics*, trans. Leo Rauch (Millis, Mass.: Agora Publications, Inc., 2003), p. 8.

¹⁸ Deleuze, Gilles, *Kant's Practical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1984), p. 1.

¹⁹ Kant, Immanuel, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. Paul Carus with revisions by James W. Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2001).

²⁰ In later chapters, I will touch on Wittgenstein, who while not a Kantian at all, was preoccupied in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* with a related objective, namely the distinction between what can, scientifically, be said and what cannot.

²¹ Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982).

²² Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

²³ I would argue that while Foucault's distinction has a historical basis, it is also strategic and thus creative in a Nietzschean sense: Nietzsche himself insists on a "historical sensibility," but takes liberties in order to make and score points.