

## REMARKS ON POUTIANIEN: AN ALTERNATIVE (TO A) RESPONSE

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1. Have the philologists pushed out all the philosophers in Derridaworld? It would certainly seem so, if Hannu Poutianien, who, of course, has a background in English, is any indication. In his review of my *Fielding Derrida*, he has dug up virtually every reference to Husserl's work on signs that Derrida makes that I do not treat, as well as an entire textual lineage comparing analytic and continental philosophy of which I was unaware.<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to him for this bibliographical service, but his is not an argument, discussion or intervention, only the raw material of one. After all, I also cite texts, to which, with one notable exception, Poutianien does not refer. It doesn't suffice, then, to cite other texts, ones that appear, and often merely appear, to contradict my conclusions. Instead, Poutianien would have had to explain how the affirmations that he believes are decisively different from mine relate to my readings of the relevant passages. That is, it would have been necessary to *interpret all of these texts* and lay out their specific relations to one another, a work of patience, but one from which we all might have learned a lot.

1.1 A sense not only of Poutianien's general procedure, but also the general tone of his review can be gleaned from a relatively early example: he refers to a work by Derrida I don't treat (written in 1993), which he himself concedes, owing to its date, represents a "temptation." "One might be tempted, here, to quote an extensive footnote from Derrida's 1993 text 'Passions,'" Poutianien writes, "one that is so blatantly at variance with Kates's description that one would soon be forgiven for succumbing to this temptation (Poutianien 81)."

1.2.1 This language of "blatantly at variance," it must unfortunately be noted, is actually somewhat mild compared to similar characterizations by Poutianien. In the course of his review, in addition to branding one of my claims an "absurdity" (Poutianien 82), he speaks of me as "brazen" (Poutianien 81), and implies that I exhibit "impudence" (Poutianien 77). Why does he repeatedly employ such language, especially since he claims that my work for him remains "an absolutely invaluable and indispensable reference" (Poutianien 77)? Was such exaggerated and inappropriate rhetoric appropriate, perhaps even somehow necessary?

1.2.2 Here is part of the still longer quote introduced by Poutianien's remarks. I cite it because Poutianien appears to be wrong about what Derrida says, and what Derrida says proves to concern the central point between us. Taken from Derrida's "Passions," part of Poutianien's long citation reads (and this will now be Derrida's text): "No one will be able seriously to contradict me if I claim...that I am not writing an "autobiographical" text but a text on autobiography of which this very text is an example. No one will seriously be able to contradict me if I say (or hint, etc.) that I am not writing about myself but on "I," on any I at all, or on the I in general, by giving an example ... Because if there is a dissociation between myself and "I," between the reference to me and the reference to (an) "I" through the example of my "I," this dissociation, which could only *resemble* a difference between "use" and "mention," is still a pragmatic difference and not properly linguistic or discursive" (Poutianien 82.)

1.2.3 The arguments that I make in *Fielding Derrida*—roughly that Derrida could only generalize in this way, could only make this claim about a generalized exemplarity of the "I", because he was working from a model of language in which all these parts of speech, particularly the "I," could be seen as having *meanings*—are in fact confirmed by what Derrida says.<sup>2</sup> His point here is that "I" as used in discourse can always be taken to stand for an "I in general" or as an example of the term "I," and thus that the difference between reference to "I" and genuine reference to a concrete individual (myself) can never be rendered unequivocal. The "I" by which I refer to myself can be construed as an example, an *instance* "of someone who speaks of something," as opposed to designating the actual individual doing such speaking.

1.2.3.1 Poutianien's own gloss thus reads Derrida precisely backwards: "A pragmatic difference," states Poutianien, "not properly linguistic but at work in language, and, moreover, in such a way as to permit an "I" to stand in for another 'I.'" (Poutianien 82) But it is not the "pragmatic difference" that lets one "I" stand in for another; this possibility accrues to the part of Derrida's discussion I have just glossed that concerns the "I"'s necessary generality. Only further on, when Derrida is complicating his argument, does he bring in this pragmatic consideration, which thus indeed proves to be secondary, as I claim. Derrida makes the further point that what can be read as an example of "I," thus allowing for this substitutability, can also be construed, not as being *about* autobiography, but *as* autobiography, thus as referring to myself, an ambiguity upon which, Derrida goes on to explain, literature and the secret play. The pragmatic difference allows for the differentiation of one I from one another, while the possibility of one standing for another is already guaranteed by the possibility of signification and semiosis itself.

1.2.3.2 This is clearly a difficult passage, and I am not calling Poutianien's reading absurd or blatantly false, though reasons would have to be offered on the order of mine to motivate his alternative. FD's own interpretation, I think it can be agreed, however, is itself far from "blatantly at variance" with Derrida's.

1.3 Another instance where Poutianien leans on a text by Derrida not at all at issue in my work deserves attention, as it provides the only occasion on which Poutianien refers to Derrida's 1962 *Introduction*, a work which really stands at the core of all that I wrote on Derrida in the 2000's.<sup>3</sup> Derrida's statement appears in "Et Cetera," a piece that I confess was previously little studied by me, which appeared in an anthology edited by Nicholas Royle in 2000. Poutianien introduces it, after insisting that on the alternative construal of the philosophy of language to which I point, one descending from Frege and exemplified by Quine, "one cannot perform eidetic variations, which," Poutianien continues, "as Derrida notes, are a hallmark of deconstructive plurivocity" (Poutianien 82). Poutianien then cites Derrida from "Et Cetera": "If all language, as was suggested elsewhere, is in itself a sort of spontaneous eidetic and transcendental reduction, and therefore also 'natural' and more or less naive, the multiplicity of reductions may be carried out by the more or less discordant concert of several voices."<sup>4</sup>

1.3.1 Derrida in this citation, relying explicitly on the argument made in 1962, affirms the possibility of passing from language to a version of Husserl's primary philosophical subject matter: namely, the transcendental-phenomenologically and eidetically reduced ego. This possibility, as Derrida sets it out, is owed to language's

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spontaneously directing us toward meaning, and also to its depending on what in his original citation Derrida calls “ideal objectivities.” Language performs a sort of spontaneous transcendental and eidetic reduction *thanks to* the ideal objectivities of which it is comprised (both words—there is only one word “cat”— and their putative meanings). It thus introduces an essential or eidetic perspective, while also ultimately pointing toward the transcendental attitude—in a far more complex fashion, since this last reduction brackets language’s own naïveté and naturalness. On the basis of this coincidence between language and the Husserlian perspective, Derrida, accordingly, affirms that a plurality of voices, a polyphony, coordinating *different potential transcendental egos* can be seen as launching successive reductions, leading to “an upping of the ante” of Husserl’s own transcendental phenomenology; “deconstruction,” as Derrida says in this very same place, “marking *an excess of fidelity as is often the case to a certain phenomenological inspiration*” (Et Cetera 296, my emphasis.).

1.3.2 Since what Derrida himself insists on here, deconstruction’s complex “excess of fidelity” to Husserlian phenomenology is pretty much the point of both of my books, Poutianien’s stance at this moment is crucial. What is his gloss? Having affirmed “deconstructive plurivocity” (a concept that he invents, treated further below) and having cited Derrida, he continues: “On this view,” “linguistic meaning, as thought by Husserl and Derrida, would not in fact constitute ‘an autonomous realm’; the ‘autonomy’ which Kates treats with such great suspicion is in fact nothing less than the essential availability of language for reinterpretation in terms of alternative scenarios (as opposed to being *fixed in terms of one single world or structure of meaning*)” (Poutianien 82, my emphasis).

1.3.3 Now, firstly, I do not ever claim that linguistic meaning as such is an autonomous realm for Husserl, or, of course for Derrida. I do claim, as Derrida himself seems to confirm here, that Husserl views language in light of its capacity to *convey meaning* (a meaning not itself always ultimately linguistic—that is the whole point of the enlivening of the sign by intentionality, resulting in the livingness, *Lebendigkeit*, of its body, something to which the linguistic sign ultimately owes its status both as meaningful and as a sign).<sup>5</sup> Correlative to this, I claim that Husserl views language and its functioning apart from actual or fulfilled reference, something I think if necessary if language is to provide a threshold to, or variant of, the reductions, since in them the existence of particulars is indeed suspended.<sup>6</sup> When it comes to Derrida, my point is the perhaps too subtle one—not that Derrida, too, holds such a view of meaning or language, which as Poutianien likes to say would be indeed “absurd”—but rather that Husserl’s model of language and its meaning provide Derrida’s *starting point*, the presupposition of his deconstruction, as Derrida himself seems to suggest at this very moment in the passage that Poutianien cites, referring to Husserl’s views on language and speaking of his own “phenomenological inspiration.”

1.3.3.1 This last step of my argument apparently strikes Poutianien as beyond the pale, since, as will become clearer, the entire trajectory of his discussion, including a moment when he concedes that I am in fact right about all of the foregoing (“What he [Kates] painstakingly shows is that Derrida agrees with Husserl as to the possibility of semantics; what he does not see—but what can now begin to be thought thanks to his efforts—is that Derrida cannot but agree with Husserl as to the semantics of possibility” [Poutianien 86], he writes near the end of review) is aimed at refuting this final phase of my discussion. Yet Poutianien, nearer to the beginning of his piece, still in the mode of high dudgeon (and why all this heavy fire, then, if I am largely correct in the end?) instead raises what are mere debating points, couched in the most extravagant language. Thus, he claims of these Husserlian presuppositions in the philosophy of language that I suggest precede Derrida’s deconstruction—all the while being aware that Derrida does not have a philosophy of language but ultimately deconstructs this very notion—that they represent “an entirely novel reading of Derrida; astounding, even, given that one cannot really find any anticipation of this [reading] in Derrida.” Poutianien’s astonishment again, as just noted, ultimately devolves from seeing me as imputing to Derrida the affirmation of an “autonomous realm of meaning” (Derrida “will continue to posit the existence of an autonomous realm of meanings” [80-1], he says, claiming to gloss me).

1.3.3.2 Yet to make this clear once and for all, as is obvious on every page of my commentary and of both Der-

ridean texts referred to above, deconstruction, of course, does not “affirm an autonomous realm of meaning.” No one, including me, claimed that it did so. This is evident in FD in the very title of the chapter following the one Poutianien focuses on, which explicitly employs “the *deconstruction* of sense” (not its *affirmation*) as a rubric for Derrida’s position and that of like-minded critics and thinkers.<sup>7</sup>

1.3.4 As to Poutianien’s specific construal of Derrida’s remarks in “Et Cetera,” his invocation of “the essential availability of language for reinterpretation in terms of alternative scenarios” broadly follows from a reinterpretation of Husserlian phenomenology performed by Martin Kusch (more on which below). More narrowly, however, Poutianien’s full gloss (not only here, but in multiple instances) suggests that Poutianien himself has not fully grasped the function of the reductions in Husserl’s writings or in Derrida’s reading of them. Setting aside for the moment the issue of Quine and a single world that he raises, which belongs in any case to the alternative that I present Husserl and Derrida *as not taking*, the work of the eidetic reduction precisely *is* “to fix... a single structure of meaning,” as Poutianien puts it above, by way of denial (Poutianien 82). An *eidōs* is just that, a univocal, universally valid ideality which allows the meanings of words but also the sense and identity of other structures and entities to be stabilized. The eidetic reduction generally, according to Husserl, gives us essences, such as the triangle of geometry, which in this case is arrived at by varying actual triangles or instances of triangularity and “seeing through” this performance to what is common to them all. In the above passage, accordingly, Derrida is reminding us that Husserl’s commitment to the *Wesensschau*, to the seeing of essences, is in some fashion already implied by language. Yet this in itself can be true, only if language is viewed primarily through the lens of meaning and of ideality as I indeed claim.

1.3.4.1 This is no minor point. The entire thrust of my work on Derrida, made in my first book, and reprised in my second, is to coordinate Derrida’s interventions in language with those pertaining to the specifically transcendental dimension of his project. Accordingly, I distinguish what Derrida makes or does with transcendentalism not only from, for example, Heidegger’s or Merleau-Ponty’s approach, but also from Kant’s, arguing that the radicality and singularity of Derrida’s intervention is most readily specified on the basis of Husserl’s version of the absolute. Moreover, as other very good commentators before me had emphasized *either* Derrida’s philosophical intervention (often still in a Kantian or Hegelian vein) *or* his stance toward language, in *Essential History*, I took pains to show in what precise fashion the two interventions were related: how, for example, Derrida’s setting out of the phenomenological voice (and the economy and privilege it embodied) deconstructed Husserl’s treatment of language, while still permitting *Husserl’s absolute to be retained* sufficiently to be reinscribed and expanded, rather than simply foreclosed, as it would be in a full-blown linguisticism (such as Whorf’s, Sapir’s, or even Quine’s or Rorty’s).

1.3.4.2 Poutianien, however, exclusively discusses the portion of my work related to language and brackets the transcendental side, something he must do, since the possible world semantics on which he ultimately relies in most construals actually *replaces* Husserl’s transcendental attitude (which is Jaakko Hintikka’s own view, as well as David Smith’s and Ronald McIntyre’s, two self-described “analytic Husserlians,” all of whom Poutianien cites), or at the very least reads it in a distinctly unprecedented manner. Ultimately, however, the two issues cannot really be separated in discussions of Husserl. Lacking sufficient acquaintance with the transcendental, phenomenological, and eidetic structures of Husserl’s thinking, one cannot make sense of what he says about language, speech, and the sign, nor what Derrida says when commenting on this.

2. Yet all of this could perhaps be set aside—not only my criticisms of Poutianien’s, but even perhaps his of me, in light of the concern that he expresses at the end of his piece, which proves to be his deepest one, and pertains not to any of my claims, but to how I make them. Poutianien there suggests that I neglect what he calls “the alternative,” a notion from which his review also takes its title. Poutianien’s alternative, however, indeed proves alternative precisely to just the sort of argument and reading to which I have so far subjected his review.

2.1 Poutianien writes: “It is such a desire to inherit *otherwise*, to inherit some *alternative*, that Derrida’s work instills...Kates, however, in his desire to respond to those aspects in Derrida that have left him something to

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desire, has responded to this desire with an interpretation that leaves him with no alternative... For it is the alternative, binding its origin to itself in giving the origin to be thought in as many modes as there are notions of the possible, that first of all *contributes to* desire. In more senses than one” (Poutianien 88).

2.1.1 According to Poutianien, then, I desire to “inherit,” but I do not do so in the right way; I am thus a bad son or daughter (about which obviously Oedipal fantasy perhaps the less said the better). This is specifically owed, pace Poutianien, to the fact that I do not “giv(e) the origin to be thought in as many modes as there are notions of the possible.” I quash what is in effect “deconstructive plurivocity,” which here makes its return.

2.2 As it happens, I genuinely regret that my writings threaten what gives Poutianien and perhaps some others pleasure in Derrida’s work (his alternative, unlike mine, “*contributes to* desire,” says Poutianien). And I also truly regret that on occasions I have doubtless been too strident in my insistence that my way of reading Derrida is the best or perhaps only way to read him. Nevertheless, one cannot simply let it go at that, turn away from what I have suggested about Poutianien, or he, in other parts of his essay about me, for two reasons: one practical, one principled.<sup>8</sup>

2.2.1. On the practical, as should now be clear, Poutianien himself, of course, shows no such restraint. He constantly uses the terminology of wrong, right, “persuasive,” “nowhere near to being conclusive” (80), and goes beyond such reasonable concerns to brazenness, impudence, absurdity, and so forth. “Deconstructive plurivocity,” “giving the origin to be thought in as many modes as there are notions of the possible,” apparently does not extend to my work. My writings fail to fall under even this capacious umbrella, presumably because I inherit in the wrong way and thus threaten the enterprise of Derridean commentary, as Poutianien understands it.

2.2.2 Not only, however, can one not stand pat with Poutianien’s alternative, insofar as he himself does not practice it, but, principledly speaking, one cannot do so in any case because this is not the alternative that *Derrida himself pursues*. Deconstruction is not in fact *possible* (nor even *all* possibles); it is not a version of what we once called polysemia, of “plurivocity,” deconstructive or otherwise, my own disinterest in which indeed seems to rattle some readers.<sup>9</sup> The very premise of deconstruction, rather, is that there is *no alternative*—to the logos, to reason, to understanding and its protocols. That is why, when deconstruction also in a unique way distances itself from all of these (while simultaneously having recourse to them), when it thinks and writes and reads *otherwise*, it affirms and practices, as Derrida himself often puts it “*the impossible*,” not the possible.

2.2.2.1. Not surprisingly, then, not only is Poutianien’s not Derrida’s alternative, but as is relatively common, the two phases visible in Poutianien’s treatment of me, the one where he affirms his “alternative” and the rest of his actual practice, simply fall asunder: the unalloyed affirmation of polysemia or plurivocity and his often strident appeal to argument, correctness of interpretation, and standards of judgment bear no discernible relation to one another. Of course, it is very difficult to think or write or read in a truly novel, genuinely unprecedented, really radically alternative manner, one that still succeeds in some fashion as discourse. Derrida’s own work, I have always believed, at its best, does just that. This is why one bothers with it and expends so much energy on it. In the present case, due modesty at least would have demanded more control in regard to both aspects (alternative and not) than Poutianien himself practices.

2.3 For Derrida, without simply confining his work to these dimensions, repeatedly insists on sound argument and interpretation not only in regard to others’ writings, but in *the reading of his own texts*. In *Aftermath*, for example, having asked, “since the deconstructionist... is supposed not to believe in truth, stability, or the unity of meaning, in intention or ‘meaning-to-say,’ how can he demand of us that we read him with pertinence, precision, rigor? How can he demand that his own text be interpreted correctly?” Derrida responds: “the answer is simple enough: this definition of the deconstructionist is false (that’s right: false, not true) and feeble; it supposes a bad (that’s right: bad, not good) and feeble reading of numerous texts, first of all mine, which therefore must finally be read or reread.”<sup>10</sup>

3. Accordingly, given that no alternative exists to proceeding as I have done, that no viable one is practiced by Poutianien himself, and that good argument and interpretation form one constant dimension or register of Derrida's own work, which he never ceased to avow in respect to others' as well as to his own writings, for the remainder of this response I will set aside this notion and confront two final crucial issues in Poutianien's review, to both of which reference has already been made. The first concerns the one occasion when Poutianien does directly address a text by Derrida I discuss and the claims I make about it; the second, the theoretical framework that buttresses his talk of an alternative and that comes forward throughout his piece: the possible world semantics of Smith and McIntyre, Hintikka, and Kusch. Since the first case—where I have, as Poutianien puts it (now again in an argumentative register), been “inclined to take a wrong turn...that will...prove fatal” (Poutianien 77)—ultimately depends on the second—a treatment of the “I” that draws on what is sometimes called “analytic phenomenology”—the two treatments ultimately blend into one another.<sup>11</sup>

3.1 At this first juncture, at issue is my commentary on the now famous first appearance in *Voice and Phenomenon* of Derrida's argument that saying “I am alive” implies the possibility of my being dead.<sup>12</sup> Having already examined at some length, in the first half of Poutianien's favored chapter, three of FD, what I sometimes call Derrida's philosophy of language—by which I mean again those presuppositions in Husserl which furnish Derrida's starting points, *not Derrida's own conclusions*—I next lay out as economically as possible Derrida's and Husserl's positions on the “I,” and on this occasion I indeed do further compare the modeling of demonstratives from *which Derrida's deconstruction starts* with their analysis in direct reference theories, as they have come to be known.

3.1.1 In line with Poutianien's penchant for citing texts I do not discuss, introducing his commentary on my commentary on Geoffrey Bennington's summary of Derrida's argument in *Derridabase*, Poutianien again insults me—he calls me “brazen”—for ignoring another piece by Bennington, of which I was unaware, that had already addressed these issues. Since, however, Poutianien misprizes Bennington's argument in this piece (if not simply Bennington's conclusions), untangling Bennington's actual claims and gauging their distance from my own (which I do not simply deny), would be too lengthy a labor to undertake on this occasion.<sup>13</sup>

3.2 Moreover, there is no need to “go there,” as we say, to discuss this work, which is in any event earlier than *Derridabase* since in that work, the work that I actually cite, Bennington in fact says exactly what I say he says, when discussing the implications of “I” for the subject's death and life. Bennington there writes: “It can be shown (SP94-7) that, like any other term, ‘I’ must be able to function in the absence of its object, and, like any other statement (this is the measure of *its necessary ideality*), ‘I am’ must be understandable in my absence and after my death. *The meaning*, even of a statement like ‘I am’ is perfectly indifferent to the fact that I be living or I be dead.”<sup>14</sup>

3.2.1 Here is my gloss: “Bennington's argument pre-supposes that the word or term ‘I’ is indeed a term “like any other,” and that as such ‘I’ does carry meaning (*Bedeutung*)—meaning, which Bennington, further tells us here, always takes the form of ‘necessary ideality’” (FD 65).

3.2.2 Derrida himself, moreover, in the text upon which both I and Bennington are commenting, says the same thing. After citing Husserl claiming that “when we read this word [‘I’] without knowing who has written it, we have a word, if not deprived of *Bedeutung* [meaning] at least foreign to its normal *Bedeutung* [meaning],” Derrida continues: “Husserl's premises should authorize us to say exactly the opposite. Just as I do not need to perceive in order to understand a perceptual statement, I do not need the intuition of the object ‘I’ to *understand the word ‘I.’* The possibility of this non-intuition constitutes the *Bedeutung* [meaning] as such...The ideality of the *Bedeutung* [meaning] has a value that is structurally testimonial” (my emphasis, VP 82).

3.2.3 Derrida speaks of the “word ‘I’,” Derrida speaks of *its Bedeutung* (usually translated meaning, or logical meaning) and also of ideality; Bennington speaks of “meaning,” and necessary ideality, and so do I. I do not see any problems here and certainly nothing worthy of being labeled “an absurdity.” This, by the way, is what

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we get from Poutianien: “The view that Bennington and Derrida identify indexicals with actual meanings is an absurdity. For a situation to assume *some* meaning, for it to be able to yield *some* meaningful experience for *some* subject, is not quite the same as *to have* a meaning. And to have *a* meaning is not necessarily to have *just one* meaning. Indeed, the *capacity* of an utterance to *assume some* meaning in *some* possible context—to function, for instance, as indicative or expressive—is the very opposite of the *incapacity* to ever function otherwise than according to a meaning that it already *has*” (Poutianien 82, his emphases).

3.3 It’s worth reconstructing Husserl’s own argument at this point, for its orientation and Derrida’s presentation of it can be confusing (a problem to which Poutianien himself at moments seems to succumb).<sup>15</sup> Derrida is arguing that Husserl *should have been quicker or more unequivocal* in assigning meaning and ideality to our comprehension of the word “I” in the case where the speaker is unknown than he actually is—this thus proving another instance where Derrida exercises “an excess of fidelity” to his “phenomenological inspiration.”

3.3.1 Husserl, more specifically, in a highly nuanced analysis, at the moment to which Derrida refers, identifies a problem that he believes is characteristic of all essentially occasional expressions (a class that includes demonstratives—“I,” “this,” “here”—or indexicals, as they are also sometimes called). This problem is an apparent divorce between what should be the genuine or actual meaning (*Bedeutung*) of the word, and the conceptualization, the general semantic function that accompanies the term “I” as found in language. The meaning of “I” when used in speech, the *Bedeutung* that it expresses, for Husserl, ultimately redounds to a presentation of the individual ego of the speaker (immediately available only to him or her); simultaneously, the general concept attached to this term, what Husserl will call the “universal semantic function of the word ‘I’” borders on a form of self-reference—the word as used in speech refers to the one speaking.<sup>16</sup> As Husserl trenchantly points out, however, these two functions or aspects cannot be immediately reconciled. One cannot replace the word “I” with the expression that appears to capture its universal semantic function, “whoever is now speaking,” since sentences containing the different phrases clearly do not always have the same truth values.

3.3.2 Husserl, who will eventually confront the possibility that the *Bedeutung* of this term changes, in the above passage, focusing on the former aspect, the presentation of the individual ego of the speaker, claims, for this reason, that when this, what he will also call the indicated meaning, is not available, owing to the speaker or author being unknown, the word “I” does not function “normally.” Derrida at the moment cited above is thus *denying this tie to the occasion of utterance* and claiming that Husserl’s presuppositions should lead *to the exactly opposite conclusion*, owing to the necessary ideality of both language and the meanings expressed in discourse (and also because Husserl himself ultimately separates the semantic function of language from its referential one and insists the former can stand on its own). “I,” in every instance, whether or not the speaker is known, should function normally, and both express and bear the same meaning (*Bedeutung*). Thus, at this moment, Derrida in fact stands further than does Husserl from that alternative that I say is found in some analytic philosophy, one which denies meaning proper to “I” altogether and insists that it simply and directly refers. For Derrida indeed insists that “I” in all of these instances should have a *Bedeutung*, a meaning. (“Just as I do not need to perceive in order to understand a perceptual statement, I do not need the intuition of the object ‘I’ to understand the word ‘I,’” states Derrida, at this moment *contesting Husserl* [VP 82].) And on *this* basis, insofar as it can and must operate in the absence of the speaker, Derrida goes on to claim that saying “I am alive” entails the possibility of my being dead.

3.3.3 Does this amount, then, to Derrida accepting, or to me saying that Derrida accepts, the teleology of ideality and fixed meanings (*Bedeutungen*)? (Poutianien goes out of his way to sententially remind me that the “teleology” ultimately underlying Husserl’s treatment is “profoundly foreign to Derrida and Bennington” [Poutianien 82].) Of course not. For Husserl, indeed returning to these themes, and asking whether the meaning, the *Bedeutung* of this expression itself may change, *himself* explicitly denies this possibility. In the next section of LI, Husserl writes: “The content meant by the subjective expression, with sense oriented to the occasion, is an ideal unit of meaning in precisely the same sense as the content of a fixed expression” (LI 321).

3.3.3.1 Thus, though Husserl sees the expression functioning with an irreducible subjective component, he insists that the *Bedeutung* at which it arrives when it functions as an expression, like all *Bedeutung*, is fixed, ideal, and stable; it does not and cannot change. And my own larger point, then, perhaps not the very last word on the subject but certainly defensible, is: a) that this total presupposition, of the ideality of all meaning expressed through language, serves as *the object* of Derrida's deconstruction, the jumping off point for his own questioning of such fixity (one which leads as is well known to a uniquely radical thought of repetition in difference); b) that a different view of language that did not trade on ideal units of meaning at all, and certainly did not see *deixis* in these terms, would not let Derrida arrive at these same outcomes. More specifically, the transcendental dimension in play in Derrida's own self-described "upping of the ante" of the reductions would not find a space in which to operate, since the dovetailing of language and the reductions that we have seen Derrida himself identify would not be available to him, owing to the continued functioning within language of reference.

3.4 Where does Poutianien come down on all of this? His recourse to a varied range of "meanings," presumably as a form of explanation, was brought forward above: "some meaning," "a meaning," "actual meanings," a "meaning it already has." Eventually, by way of further, perhaps more compelling rejoinder, he will make reference to Kusch's account of indexicality in Husserl, as well as cite, not from the *Logical Investigations*, but from a work written by Husserl some twenty five years after it.

3.4.1 Before that, however, prior to specifying an alternative account of Husserl on indexicals, Poutianien denies that there is any difference between Derrida's and Husserl's approach and the alternative which I discuss. (One of the problems I had in "responding" to Poutianien is his recourse at this crucial moment to a species of "kettle logic," as Derrida following Freud called it. There is no difference between Husserl and Derrida and those to whom I contrast him, Poutianien first argues, but just in case there is one, it's not the one I say it is, now appealing to Kusch's work. Similarly, in the instance of the kettle, I tell my neighbor that I never borrowed it at all, but just in case I did, the kettle already had that dent in it, I add, before my neighbor gave it to me.)

3.4.2 Poutianien initially argues, then, that the difference I claim to find between analytic and continental approaches, specifically between those of David Kaplan, John Perry, and the direct reference school more generally and Husserl's own is chimerical. "It is not possible to remove indexicals 'from anything that might be genuinely called a meaning,'" he writes, in part citing me, "indexicals, after all, remain indexical expressions." Poutianien continues: "David Kaplan, to whose work Kates refers this part of his argument, never denies this. Quite the contrary: D.W. Smith and Ronald McIntyre have noted that 'Husserl's account of demonstratives and Kaplan's coincide up to a point: both hold that demonstratives refer directly; both recognize two levels of meaning for demonstratives, one that varies with the occasion of utterance and one that does not.' No grave difference between Kaplan and Husserl, then" (Poutianien 83).

3.4.3 Without turning directly to Kaplan, however, staying with Poutianien's own authorities, Smith and McIntyre raise this comparison with Kaplan, it should be noted, explicitly in the context of *correcting Husserl*.<sup>17</sup> ("The theory of demonstratives and perceptual *Sinn* that we have presented is *not quite that of Husserl* in LI.") Moreover, the point in question in their own concession, in their claim that "Husserl's and Kaplan's coincide up to a point," is just the point at issue in my own discussion: that point where language is claimed to be able to be understood entirely in terms of *Bedeutungen* (meanings) and idealities.<sup>18</sup>

3.4.3.1 "Husserl's account of demonstrative reference resembles the contextualist account," they write. Beginning to cash out the juncture at which not only Kaplan, but also they themselves differ from Husserl, they continue: "however, upon closer reading Husserl's account differs importantly from the contextualist account... Husserl's account of demonstrative reference is a contextualist account only if it takes intuition to be a partly contextual, perhaps partly causal and not purely intentional relation. *But there is no evidence of such a view in Husserl*; throughout his works, he consistently characterized perception—and intuition in general—as an experience whose intentional relation to an object is achieved by means of its phenomenological content, or *Sinn...*" (Smith and McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality* 217, my emphasis).

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3.4.3.2 Compare the above with how I characterize this same difference, between the direct reference or analytic approach and Husserl's own, in FD: "This indicative dimension within language is indeed the crux of the analysis of indexicals brought out above [by Perry, but also by Kaplan]. To it is owed the removal of indexicals from anything that might be genuinely called a meaning. Thanks to functioning *in the factual and the real*, thanks to being at work within *the particular circumstances of discourse and communication in which they occur*, indexicals are indeed claimed to be able to refer to particulars without any conceptual mediation. The work of indexicals, one might say, simply is the work of the indicative" (FD 68, my emphasis).

3.4.4 So the temerity is not so great, the brazenness not so extreme, with which I suggest that there is an alternate view and that this view has consequences for Derrida's argument. Following Husserl's own, Derrida's thinking indeed takes a different path through indexicality, even as it arrives at a perhaps parallel or still more radical deconstruction of these terms and suppositions, one that also shows fidelity, an excess of fidelity, to its phenomenological inspiration, a result that would indeed not be possible had Derrida started from those views in philosophy of language (dependent on "causal" and other contexts, and thus not "purely intentional"), as described by McIntyre and Smith, that I and they both contrast with Husserl's.

3.5 Moreover, since this issue of *Sinn*, specifically phenomenological content, has arisen thanks to McIntyre and Smith, recurring to a point made earlier, I should mention that Poutianien's review gives no indication that he understands what these authors so clearly refer to here: the overall architectonic of Husserl's thought, and specifically, the relation between the various reductions and Husserl's parsing of language and its different registers. Though Poutianien will lecture me long and hard on context in general and in Derrida, nowhere does he seem to grasp why Husserl really could never endorse context of this kind without shortcircuiting the core of his own thinking.<sup>19</sup>

4 As I mentioned, however, another, alternative phase of Poutianien's treatment exists, in which he denies what he claims here and recognizes that there might after all be some difference between Husserl's and Derrida's approach and that found in the analytic school. There, he relies on Martin Kusch, following Hintikka, to suggest a different reading than I offer of Husserl's own treatment of indexicality and, to some degree, Derrida's. An irony, however, lurks here. The case I make for a difference in the treatment of demonstratives falls under a broader contrast I draw between analytic and continental approaches to philosophy of language that I set out at length in chapter four of FD. Those upon whom Poutianien primarily relies, the logician Hintikka (also a possible world theorist) and Kusch, however, agree with me entirely when it comes to this broader claim. (Kusch unlike McIntyre and Smith, or even Hintikka, on this basis, does, however, attempt to find in Husserl, albeit only in the late Husserl, a nascent version of possible world semantics—a school or approach, based on work in modal logic, which had yet to exist of course at the time that Husserl died).

4.1 Kusch and Hintikka, more specifically, start from the opposition they believe pioneered by Jean van Hiejenoot writing on the recent history of logic, one originally drawn by Leibniz, between logic as *lingua universalis* (universal language or medium) and logic as a *calculus ratiocinator* (a rational calculus). Despite the somewhat unlikely usages of each of these terms, the force of the latter is not only that such a logic can be used for reasoning, but that it permits *reasoning about reasoning*. Thus, Hintikka uses *calculus ratiocinator* to describe what he calls "the model-theoretical tradition," to which he belongs, as does Husserl, according to both himself and Kusch.<sup>20</sup> Kusch, moreover, in his work, explicitly sets the stance that he and Hintikka share, a version of which I myself have labeled the prevalent one in continental philosophy and literary studies, over against Heidegger's approach to discourse and language. (Since the publication of FD, I have repeatedly drawn this very same contrast, and it is indeed what I mean when I say that there really are only two paths available in philosophy of language, the way of reference and the way of meaning).<sup>21</sup>

4.2 Moreover, just as I do, this entire school, which centers around Hintikka—and also includes his son, I believe, Merrill B. Hintikka—traces this initiative centered on logic as universal medium back to Frege. Thus, Hintikka, spelling out his position, draws the very same conclusions about the absence or impossibility of

*semantics*—that is, any systematic treatment of meaning (*Bedeutung*)—in certain analytic construals of philosophy of language that I highlight, a differentiation which obviously stands behind my claim that Derrida in this regard falls with Husserl on one side of a still greater divide.

4.2.1 Of “Frege’s *Formalsprache*,” which Hintikka deems “not a particular development beyond our ordinary language,” but “a purified and streamlined version of the entire ordinary language itself,” he explicitly states: “Its semantics cannot be defined without circularity, for this semantics is assumed in all uses, and it cannot be defined in a metalanguage because there is no such language beyond our working language. *In brief, the semantics of our one and only actual language is inexpressible in it...*” (Hintikka, *Lingua Universalis* x, my emphasis). The entire premise of Hintikka’s and Kusch’s approach to their own and Husserl’s philosophy of language thus rests precisely on the status of semantics and on a contrast to meaning’s foreclosure by a certain tradition, that they, just as I do, identify as devolving from Frege.

4.3 Of course, Kusch unlike the others sees something like a nascent possible world theory in Husserl himself. Yet the import of his Husserl interpretation for my treatment, given the broader context, is somewhat nebulous and certainly not the one Poutianien advances. Indeed, Poutianien is seemingly drawn to these thinkers and their program, but especially Kusch, in the service of what turns out to be another debating point. Because I express nearly this same divergence of traditions through a contrast between the privileging of reference as performed in the analytic tradition (congruent with the suppression of meaning just identified) in contrast to the privileging of sense as performed by the alternative Husserlian and continental one, and since possible world semantics ultimately construes *meaning* by way of *reference to possible worlds*, Poutianien believes that this strand of thinking, and especially Kusch’s rereading of Husserl in this light, somehow refutes this entire contention or offers a significant alternative to it.<sup>22</sup> Having indeed postulated meaning as a realm capable of investigation in its own right, one with at least relative autonomy insofar as it is not tied to our specific world, these thinkers then seek to cash out the semantics of such meaning by introducing reference to other worlds (the reference of another subject in another world, though what the reality of these possibles are remains open-ended). Poutianien somehow believes this final appeal to reference thus constitutes a refutation or a response to my stated positions, specifically my claim that Husserl, and Derrida initially, view language in terms of *meaning*.

4.3.1 I, however, was, of course, writing about what Husserl *said* in the works Derrida *discusses*, specifically, the *Logical Investigations* (and also *the Origin of Geometry*). None of the authors in question here and not even Kusch, as far as I can tell, claim to find possible worlds in these texts. Moreover, alongside offering a relatively orthodox interpretation of Husserl, I was interested above all in explaining how *Derrida* read Husserl—Derrida whom not even Poutianien I assume takes to be a possible world theorist or believes sees Husserl in this light. (Or does he? Recall his remark cited previously, which continues: “What he [Kates] painstakingly shows is that Derrida agrees with Husserl as to the *possibility of semantics*; what he does not see... is that Derrida cannot but agree with Husserl as to the *semantics of possibility*” [Poutianien 86].) Accordingly, this whole of line of analytic phenomenology, though possibly interesting, really seems not to have any critical or probative force for my position, which is perhaps why in the end, as just noted, Poutianien ultimately grants my fundamental point.<sup>23</sup>

4.3.2 Am I, then, saying that there might not be something of interest in this alternative, some truly fruitful work to be done? Of course not. In fact, when I first saw Poutianien’s review, I was genuinely excited to encounter another tradition of discussion of Husserl and of language of which I had been unaware, as well as to encounter many interesting quotes and references from Derrida and the literature on him, to which I had previously paid at best only wavering attention. Indeed, I would have welcomed a drawing out of some of these points, including ones that led to different conclusions than my own. Whether Poutianien himself will ever undertake this sort of labor, of which he seems well capable, is of course a question only he can answer. What is certain is that none of it appears in his review.

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5 My present remarks began from a distinction between philology and philosophy; this contrast, of course, invites interrogation, if not outright rejection. For, in the present case, and I believe this finding can be generalized, good philology and good philosophy turn out to buttress one another; they coincide in the necessity Derrida once described as a guardrail: to *interpret* as accurately as possible *and* to *argue* cogently and consequently. In fact, it was in part owing to Derrida's own superlative abilities in just this regard, his extraordinary interpretations, and innovative, powerful, complex, and detailed arguments, that some of us were first drawn to his work.

5.1 On the subject of how to read Derrida and how Derrida reads, Poutianien, I should also mention, makes a great deal out of my sometimes sequential reading of Derrida's texts. "1962, 1967. These dates function for Kates as an ordered pair of regulative metonymies," he states (Poutianien 87). On this score, he, as do some others, in addition to the other reasons already noted, considers my approach fundamentally UnDerridean. Even in my first book, however, where such sequence makes its first and most extended appearance, I do not follow a strict chronological order. My reading of Derrida's 1954 *Le Probleme in Essential History* follows on my reading of his 1962 *Introduction*, and similarly I read *Of Grammatology* in the wake of VP, while noting that the former was composed before it. Thus, my organization of Derrida's texts was and remains heuristic and tactical. Proceeding thus, moreover, I was following *Derrida's own practice as a reader*, at least in some instances. Indeed, in such towering interpretations as that of the work of the structuralist critic Jean Rousset in "Force and Signification," of Emmanuel Levinas's thought in "Violence and Metaphysics," or of Rousseau's corpus in the second part of *Of Grammatology*, Derrida himself employs just this same sort of sequencing: largely serial, while also deviating from it.<sup>24</sup> It is also noteworthy that this worry expressed by some Derrideans finds no analogue when it comes to the interpretations of Derrida's presumed peers: both Foucault and Lacan, for example, are commonly said by some of their finest interpreters to have held certain positions at earlier phases of their thinking, which they later modified, altered, or adjusted in decisive ways. Why this should register for some as such a transgression in work on Derrida, rather than what it is—a way of treating themes and issues in Derrida's work with a concreteness that is not always otherwise possible—quite frankly eludes me.

5.2 Yet that Poutianien's work at this late date apparently represents a defensible stance in theory, in continental philosophy, in Derrida studies, such that he can gain access to the public sphere, may also attest to a broader problem implied by Derrida's work and much of theory and contemporary continental philosophy. Derrida, of course, no more than anyone else, was totally in control of all he said and did, and doubtless there is something in his own writings which does or can appear to warrant Poutianien's way of proceeding. Yet the work Derrida does with the tradition, the fact that he inherits in a new way (though this may perhaps be true, and I myself on other occasions have tried to gauge the measure of this innovation), is not sufficient to account for at least some of the discourse on Derrida. As we have seen, after all, Derrida was always serious about the legitimacy of his own interpretations and those of his work. In addition to the other evidence I cited, just recall the depth of his and Foucault's disagreement about Descartes' text; this controversy alone should make abundantly clear that neither of these thinkers when it came to interpretation was willing to settle for deconstructive or any other kind of plurivocity or to affirm "the impossibility and undesirability of determinative readings in general."

5.3 More essential, then, especially in Derrida's case, is the fact that he inherits at all: that his works *are at once primary and secondary*. To contend with the complexities not only of Derrida's work, but of those he reads independently of his treatment—a Husserl or a Hegel, a Benjamin, a Blanchot—is doubtless burdensome, and perhaps something more than that. It is thus understandable, seeing as how Derrida has apparently already read these authors, to fix on his writings and positions, and to treat the texts of those he discusses entirely or largely through his lens. Derrida's way of proceeding almost demands the lapse of what Derrida used to call vigilance.

5.3.1 This observation may well be somewhat obvious; it entails something potentially more unprecedented, however, of which I myself long ago became convinced (despite the enormously high regard I had and still hold for Derrida's work): namely, that Derrida could not have *become Derrida* in the first place, he could not have invented his unique thought and inscription, by reading only or primarily *Derrida* (something that would be

similarly true of Foucault, Deleuze, and so forth). Derrida had to read, had to be formed by, rather, folks who did not deconstruct, transgress, or approach the tradition “a tergo,” as Deleuze put it: Gueroult and Hippolyte, Bachelard and Cavallès, not to mention of course Husserl, Hegel, Kant, and Plato themselves. Accordingly, the danger of affirming without reserve, as Poutianien and so many others seem to, the break or transformation with the tradition that Derrida and his cohort seem to have wrought, no matter what form it takes, willingly or no, consists finally in making impossible, or at least more unlikely, the future appearance of thinkers similar to Derrida and those just mentioned—that is, more truly radical, new, and innovative authors, providing substantial alternatives to the perspectives that now exist. Precisely because Derrida himself deploys mimesis beyond its traditional economies, to imitate him not only is strictly impossible, but it may well impede the eruption of other unanticipatable moments when a radically unprecedented alternative such as his own emerges.

5.3.2 Of course, to harbor such concerns, to say this, and to comment on Derrida’s texts in a way that follows from this conviction, according to Poutianien, and perhaps not only him, makes of me a bad son (or daughter), someone who inherits wrongly. Yet what, finally, is the problem with that for we Derrideans?

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### NOTES

1. Hannu Poutiainen, "To Desire, Nevertheless, the Alternative: Joshua Kates, *Fielding Derrida: Philosophy, Literary Criticism, History, and the Work of Deconstruction*." *Parrhesia* 17 (2013): 76-91.
2. Joshua Kates. *Fielding Derrida: Philosophy, Literary Criticism, History, and The Work of Deconstruction*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008 (hereafter FD).
3. Jacques Derrida, *Introduction to Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry*. Trans. John P. Leavey, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.
4. Jacques Derrida, "Et Cetera..." Trans. Geoffrey Bennington, *Deconstructions: A User's Guide*, Ed Nicholas Royle. London & New York: Routledge, 2000, 296.
5. See FD 53-58.
6. In a later phase, often said to be inaugurated by *Experience and Judgement*, a work Poutianien does cite, particulars in their particularity, including their mode of existence, will indeed be taken up by Husserl as topics of phenomenological *description*. Even here, however, the reductions are of course still practiced and the affirmation of particulars' existence suspended.
7. "Literary Theory's Languages: The Deconstruction of Sense vs. the Deconstruction of Reference" is the full title (FD 75).
8. Poutianien, near the very beginning of his piece, also takes me to task for ignoring Derrida's avowal that he himself "does not always write with a desire to be understood" (77). This seems to me, however, the most unlikely of moments to invoke the author's authority; moreover, to actively "not read" Derrida, while writing on him, seems neither a viable, nor finally, in truth, a Derridean alternative.
9. I have in mind Diane Enns's remark, in her review of my first book, *Essential History* (Northwestern University Press, 2005) that I ignored how Derrida's "work and themes harp on the impossibility and undesirability of determinative readings in general," a characterization of Derrida's work that I still find wrongheaded. Enns was also somehow scandalized that I would connect analytic initiatives and Derrida's work, though in regard to this, my first book, she erected a passing comment in a footnote to a central claim of the entire work. Her review opens by suggesting my book would interest primarily those "who believe[s], as the author does, that Derrida's thought should be brought 'more within the mainstream of Anglo-American philosophical discourse from which it even today remains largely excluded'," an orienting comment clearly meant to exclude me from much of the existing cohort of Derrida scholars (*Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews Online 2006.05.08*). For other reviews of *Essential History*, which viewed it in a rather different light, see: Gary Banham, *Derrida Today*, 1.1 [May 2008]: 131-142; Robert Tivaudey, *Revue Philosophique de la France et L'étranger*, 2007/3: 396-8, Peggy Kamuf, *The Year's Work in Critical and Cultural Theory*, 2007 1-6 [on line]; Robert Piercey, *Philosophy in Review* 26.4 (2006): 265-67; Halil Ibrahim Yenigun, *Virginia Quarterly Review* Summer 2006 [on line].
10. Jacques Derrida, "Afterword: Toward An Ethic of Discussion." *Limited Inc*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988, 146.
11. Smith refers to his own work (written with McIntyre) that Poutianien cites, as "analytic phenomenology," in the bibliography he appends to his write-up on "Phenomenology" for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>. (The work in question is: Smith, D. W., and McIntyre, R. *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*. Dordrecht and Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1982.)
12. All references to this work, hereafter VP, are to the recent English edition: Jacques Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*. Trans. Leonard Lawlor. Evanston, Ill: Northwestern UP, 2011.
13. Geoffrey Bennington. *Legislations: The Politics of Deconstruction*, London: Verso, 1994, 293, my emphasis.
14. Geoffrey Bennington. *Derridabase*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993 110 (the last emphasis is mine).
15. Poutianien, by way of rebutting my claim that Derrida follows Husserl in seeing "I" as subject to meaning (*Bedeutung*), cites Derrida saying that "An essentially occasional expression is recognizable in that it cannot in principle be replaced in speech by a permanent objective conceptual representation without distorting the meaning (*Bedeutung*) of the statement." Poutianien does not seem to realize that Derrida is paraphrasing (indeed almost quoting verbatim) from Husserl at this point in his discussion. In the meantime, however, Poutianien somewhat curiously does use the occasion to take me to task for leaving out "in speech," when I cite this same statement: "Derrida says 'in speech,' *dans le discours*... Kates elides this passage in both of his books" (Poutianien 84n39).
16. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*. Trans. J. N. Findlay. New York: Humanities Press, 1970, v.1 315; all references will be to this edition and hereafter will be given in the text to LI.
17. For my account of Kaplan, see FD 66n32.
18. The fuller quote from Smith and McIntyre reads: "The theory of demonstratives and perceptual *Sinn* that we have presented is not quite that of Husserl in LI...However Husserl's reasons for balking at demonstratives expressing perceptual sense per se seem to be flawed and involve mistakes he should not have made if he had then clearly articulated the doctrine of X's put forth in *Ideas*." D. W. Smith and R. McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Language and Meaning* (Boston: Kluwer, 1985) 215.
19. At moments, following Smith and McIntyre, Poutianien, it should be noted, sees Derrida as correcting Husserl when it

comes to context: “Derrida, therefore, in rigorously reaffirming the importance of context, should in fact be seen as repairing a fault in Husserl’s own understanding of context.” Yet Poutianien here and elsewhere continues to speak of “*Husserl’s and Derrida’s* semantic preconditions” (my emphasis, both cites 85). Of course my claim is that Derrida does not rigorously reaffirm the importance of context in the same fashion as do Smith and McIntyre (though a specific notion of it returns at the outcome of deconstruction) and that in fact he cannot do so while also sharing Husserl’s “semantic presuppositions.”

20. Jaakko Hintikka, *Lingua Universalis vs. Calculus Ratiocinator: An Ultimate Presupposition of Twentieth-Century Philosophy*. Norwell, Ma: Kluwer, 1997, xi.

21. See Martin Kusch, “Husserl and Heidegger on Meaning,” in Hintikka *Lingua Universalis vs. Calculus Ratiocinator: An Ultimate Presupposition of Twentieth-Century Philosophy*, 240-268.

22. “From this it follows that the semantic theory most appropriate to Husserlian phenomenology,” Poutianien writes, “and to which it may comport its formidable powers of analysis, is that of possible worlds semantics...where meanings are defined as *functions from expressions to extensions in possible worlds* and therefore as *merely a more complex sort of reference*” (Poutianien 86, his emphasis).

23. It is, of course, implausible that Derrida, who did live during its heyday, somehow endorsed without knowing it, a possible world semantics. This is especially so, considering that Kusch at least, the only one to find this doctrine in Husserl, in order to do so, must explicitly discard the alternative that might have appealed to Derrida, one affirmed by David Lewis among others, of possible worlds radically different from our own (Kusch “Husserl and Heidegger on Meaning,” 247).

24. Derrida gives a clue to his reliance on this sort of reading strategy in *A Taste for the Secret* when he refers to the influence of the Descartes scholar Martial Gueroult on his work (*Taste*, 45). To Gueroult, of course, Derrida appealed when he offered a reading of Descartes’ meditations contrasting with Foucault’s in *The History of Madness*.