

left/right

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I

It is rather remarkable how our present-day distinction between left and right wing came about by chance in 1789, when opposing political groupings sat to the left or the right of the presidential rostrum in the *Assemblée nationale*. It is remarkable in its contingency, since it extended to the sphere of collective existence the asymmetrical nature of the human body, with its unevenly sized hands, its heart, usually found on the left side, and its liver on the right. Undoubtedly, certain connections between anatomical symbolism and the division of space emerge as soon as one places a subject there, or more precisely, as soon as one considers this space itself as a subject. This is a well-known and well-documented question that will no doubt continue to generate possibilities for today's physicists.

The above is not to be taken as a mere curiosity. In the same way that the oppositions between front and back, vertical and horizontal, and near and far are laden with considerable implications, values and discursive potential, it may be that the seemingly more modest opposition between left and right holds within it much more than what 230 years of political usage has accustomed us to.

Parmenides, for example, believed that in the womb, boys are to be found on the left side and girls on the right. The Latin word *sinister*, or left, has given us the word as we know it today.¹ Etruscan soothsayers observed whether birds flew over their *templum* from right to left or from left to right. In tarot, one may draw cards with the left hand only. The distinction between right and left expresses a profusion of forms of religious and cultural observance, of ideas, fantasies and obsessions.

It is perhaps not irrelevant to note that this vast genealogy is related to the contingency at the origin of its political meaning. When, on 11th September 1789, the members of the French National Constituent Assembly voted on the crucial question of whether to grant the King the right to veto—a right whose meaning and purpose are easily comprehensible—those in favour of the granting the veto gathered to the right side of the presidential rostrum, while those against it gathered on the left. Save for a few rare exceptions, the nobility and the clergy were grouped together on the right and the *tiers état* on the left. (It is possible that the use of groupings in the British House of Commons influenced this division into sides.)

The subsequent events of the French Revolution reinforced the topology that had been inaugurated and opened it up to its worldwide usage.

Nevertheless, the idea of being to the right of an important person has long since held a symbolic meaning, a feature one discerns from the Bible to dinner party etiquette. Perhaps it is inverted in other cultures, but I would be surprised—though it would be necessary to check—if there existed a culture that did not in some way exhibit the symbolism of the distinction between right and left.

II

However, what is at stake here is neither the study of this symbolism, nor of its presence in the bodies of numerous animals or in other phenomena. There exists a significant amount of scientific and speculative research on this question. It is rather a matter of enquiring into the origins of this quite remarkable heritage, which has infinitely exceeded that of other metaphors and metonymies (like the Russian for ‘quickly!’, which became the French word *bistrot*, or the Eskimo word *anorak*, whose meaning has not ceased changing, to say nothing of all the Anglicisms in other languages). Neither is it a question of considering the meanings, themselves also political, of colours like red, white, brown or green. Indeed, if in

the 1920s ‘a red’ meant ‘a communist,’ this fact was also linked to another much older logic, that of emblems and coats of arms and, more generally, to the collection of values and functions that colours have always represented in societies.

What is at stake is rather the simple fact that the opposition between the right and the left side has by itself come to constitute a conceptuality quite independent of its other meanings. Of course, I have mentioned the privilege which seems for a long time to have ennobled (if one may use such a term) the ‘right,’ and which may have contributed to this fact.

One thing remains certain: everything happens on one and the same level. There is no third dimension, other than the throne of the king and the office of the president. And indeed, it remains to be established whether the king retains any effective pre-eminence. The division between right and left occurs primarily on the ground. There we see the symbol of what is at stake: the ground that we all walk on, with no position of domination and, inversely, no place to hide and be forgotten, on the ground that for the first time everyone walks on—the ground upon which we walk neither for work nor for pleasure, but to gather, to assert that we are on the same side.

What then is a side? A side is a facet or aspect of an object that has more than one (let us leave one-dimensional objects to the mathematicians and physicists). Indeed, such objects have two sides, the right and the left, but given that two-dimensional objects are somewhat rare in the natural world, how are they constituted? They are constituted by the elimination of a third dimension, namely elevation, and of the other facets or aspects that generally form the front and the back.

An object that only had a right and a left could not be completed, enhanced or enriched by any other kind of property. A redwood tree, a worm or a *homo sapiens* can be big, small, bulky or misshapen, but this has no effect on the fact that they have a right side and a left side. What affects this, as noted above, is rather the presence of a subject that determines a right and a left, in the same way that the direction in which a river flows determines its right and left banks.

A ship has a right side and a left side, which is easily understandable since it is designed to sail bow-first, but its crew members do not always face in the same direction at the same time, so in order to avoid misunderstandings a system was

invented whereby the word ‘battery’ was written in large letters on the deck, thus giving the only reliable indication regarding the two sides of the ship: ‘port’ and ‘starboard’ (in French *bâbord* and *tribord* fulfil the same function, while in German one says *Backbord* and *Steuerbord*, and so on).

III

The maritime conquest of the world that emanated from Europe was a process of navigation guided by directions, whether known or intuited (a new passage to Asia, the possibility of new lands, and so on). It followed on from the imperial conquests in the Far East, around the Mediterranean and ultimately the conquests of the Roman Empire, which itself ended up conquered and dismembered.

In each case it was a question of territory: whether one speaks of an empire on which the sun never sets, or a barony which stretches over the area of four cantons, the important point is that there was a territory, the drawing of boundaries and in turn obedience to the authority that reigns over that territory. The importance of territory of course lies in its surface area, but this area itself, as well as the efforts to expand it, relates primarily or *eminently*, to use an old legal term, to a given authority, whatever its origin may be (myth, conquest, allegiance, or typically all three at once).

In 1789, however, there emerged a new schema based neither on territory (which, of course, did not disappear but instead became at once highly complex and immaterial), nor on soil with its fertility, strategic advantages and ancestral cultures. This schema was not based on the soil of the “country” [*pays*] as the privileged place of belonging, but on the “country” that considers itself above all as population: at a certain moment, what feudal custom had determined as belonging and allegiance to a specific prince began to change, such that what now prevailed was the idea of a “nation” and a “national people” which had no other belonging or allegiance than to itself.

With this nation emerged a pure space in which one finds not places, morals or techniques, but only *positions* with regard to this belonging or allegiance to self. One is on the right or on the left with regard to the same thing: let us call it the “good” of the nation. Under feudalism, all one could do is differ from or oppose the individual to whom one was loyal [*féal*].

And yet, to simplify greatly, as is sometimes necessary, one might say that one found on the right those who subscribed entirely to the model of territory endowed with an authority. Up until now the “right” has remained faithful to what characterised it as the “honorific” side. Whatever the practical, supernatural or symbolic reasons—which themselves are not without interest—for the benefits recognised on the right, what matters here is the lineage, be it fortuitous or not, from the most honourable position to another kind of position—here in the sense of a “judgment”—according to which there exists in fact or by grace, whether naturally or supernaturally, the more or the less honourable.

Whichever form it takes, the right does not *primarily* relate to power or order. If it does so, it is because its very mode of thought is structured by a dominant order—be it natural or religious, it does not matter—that imposes *itself*. The right wing is not simply that which wants order, security or respect for law and tradition. It seeks these because they alone respond both to the fundamental, cosmological, ontological or theological truth according to which this territory is here, this people is here, these animals, these plants, and to an eternal knowledge of the provenance or the necessity of all of this.

One might say: the right implies a metaphysics—or if one prefers, a mythology, an ideology—of something given absolutely and primordially, and about which nothing or very little can be changed. The left implies the opposite: that this can and must be changed.

(Digression: here I am passing over Greek democracy, which no doubt already contains important elements of the displacement I am trying to indicate; the same goes for both Republican and Imperial Rome. From the point of view that concerns us here, one finds nothing like “right-left” opposition in these periods, not even in the slave rebellions that many empires saw, or in the conflicts or secessions in Rome between the plebs and the patricians.)

To put it schematically, up until 1789 there had existed every possible form of—at times disastrous—confrontation between groups and peoples, between peoples or within them, between given legitimacies and legitimised dominations. But it had never been affirmed that every legitimacy had to emanate from the “people,” that is to say, from people assembled by a belonging and an allegiance *who precisely now have to answer for their own legitimacy*.

(Another digression: the political life of Athens and Rome included a “civil religion,” the observance of a sort of originary legitimacy that could not be questioned. There is also the case of Christianity, where the feudal system, which had come from elsewhere, had managed combine itself with Christian observance, but this system was broken down by the establishment of the modern State, which precisely allows nothing above itself.)

IV

Thus in 1789—to retain this symbolic date—there was a radically new split: where legitimacy, and in turn authority, had always referred to a beyond, it now became possible to demand that these be founded *here*. The “right” became the generic name for all the ways of reserving a “beyond” (called “nature”), while the left became the generic name for all the ways of trying to found things “here.” According to this designation, neither of the above has any other referent than its “side.” Of course, each side offered a justification other than laterality, but what cannot escape our attention is that the “right-left” vocabulary alone maintains such a distribution.

Is this split not astounding when one thinks that it arose only after three million years of human existence? For all that time, while defining, configuring and governing the collective has certainly been at issue, it had never been envisaged that a given collectivity could form itself without any higher principle, nor that it could tend towards considering itself as the collectivity of all human beings. Yet the idea that a collectivity can, on the one hand, form and govern itself and, on the other, be oriented toward all of humanity—this is perhaps the minimal content of what is called *the left*.

Here we must alter our habitual way of looking at things: we view 1789 as the completion of a liberation, whereas we should learn to see it as the emergence—after a period of maturation—of an entirely new anthropological condition. This condition is fundamentally the one formulated by Marx, according to which humans are the producers of their own social existence, which also means that society is both the condition and the goal of human existence. Where before there existed discrete unities—individuals, if one prefers—that were primarily indexed to a lineage, territory, authority or sacrality, this individual (this “someone”) was in a certain sense transformed into an atom of the social molecule of which it is at once product and producer, agent and patient, part and whole.

It goes without saying that what appears here is related to the fact that at the same moment—between the 15th and 18th centuries - the same humanity and society had invented self-production [*l'autoproduction*] as the general regime of civilisation: on the one hand, modern science as the production of calculable models (for example, we no longer perceive the brightness of light but determine its speed and constitution) and, on the other hand, wealth, which finds its principle not in accumulation but in the act of investment, by which it produces more wealth. It is with these two tools that technics [*la technique*] truly emerges: one sees the invention of ways of producing a form of energy other than that which is already given (water, wind, human and animal bodies)—steam, for example—which result in machines that are not only more powerful and thus more productive, but that themselves initiate other forms of energy and in turn of production.

V

We do not pay enough attention to the fact that political revolution and industrial or economic revolution involve one and the same process: namely, producing instead of reproducing the given—producing, therefore, that which is not given, the absolutely new.

What profoundly separates the right and the left is that the former, faced with the emergence of absolute Production, scrambles to bestow upon it the characteristics of the “given” (except in the case of those nostalgic for the aristocracy). This time the givers [*les donateurs*] no longer need to be gods; it is nature that is worked upon by the genius of humanity, which gives itself the means of Production. Ultimately, humanity is the self-producer par excellence, or even Production itself. What results is the worship of Science, Industry, and money.

These schematic remarks could be unfolded and elaborated in a more contemporary context (it suffices think of commonplace questions like that of renewable energy or the control of financial transactions). What must be noted here is rather the following: while the right initially related Production to a natural given, and often invoking a supernatural guarantor (God blesses the productivity of man, even if he does not confuse it with the secret of his soul), the left, on the contrary, believed in good faith—and often all the more so since it was free from God—that humanity gave itself to itself, that it drew from itself the means to produce a new existence.

This is why up until now at least one absolute criterion at least has separated the right from the left: that of justice. The right thinks justice as something given in some way or other—not perfect, no doubt, but available and perfectible. Justice is given in the conditions that nature and society make possible. For this reason, a large part of the struggles for economic and social justice of the last two centuries have quite logically consisted in demanding that the *necessary* (in terms of revenue, housing, education, etc.) be determined according to what is made *possible* by production: if it is possible to provide housing, treat illnesses and educate people in such or such a way, then this is what must be done. It is in this direction that all of their “progressive,” “social” or “humanistic” attitudes tend (and here it is sometimes difficult to discern left from right).

VI

There is, however, another possibility in the anthropological mutation that we are speaking of, and perhaps not just a possibility, but a demand: the demand that one understand justice in terms of allowing each and everyone (all by each, and reciprocally) to be or to become the producer of his or her own existence. In investigating the value of work and the share of this value (“surplus value”), Marx was driving at nothing other than this fact: that the producer produces more than the product, that he produces himself as humanity and that reciprocally, to be human is to produce oneself as such. In this sense, Marx described the crux of the mutation perfectly: humanity is not a given (no more than the whole of the universe is).

The human being is nevertheless not a product, especially if it is the producer. Here one can either insist on this contradiction, or wonder whether it is not precisely the model of production and self-production (money, technology—technologies of money and the financing of technologies) that has caused problems for the left. The Soviet Union attempted to construct a society based on the self-production and thus the self-reproduction of a humanity that was to become nothing other than a producer in its rightful place. Nevertheless, on one hand, this society quietly reproduced enormous inequalities, while on the other—and this is related to the first phenomenon—it established a profound separation between society and another reality which was that of a military, police and political complex whose sole aim was to be a world power. It is no doubt not incorrect to say that Mao Zedong wanted to avoid this risk in forcing, in the name of a “cultural revolution,” everything together in what was supposed to produce (itself as) a truly different

society which would be just because in it each and all would be subsumed into a new “people.”

Once again, however, and to say nothing of the all the violence to which this process gave rise, it was a question of producing, of producing the Producer and ultimately Production itself as the truth of humanity.

Fascism and Nazism gave us a slightly different version in which production was replaced by regeneration. Instead of positing a kind of pure emergence of productive power, they went back toward a generative force. The gesture of the right always has to do with a prior giving, origin or pre-disposition. The gesture of the left interrogates the future and above all allows itself nothing that is pre-given.

VII

There is nothing pre-given on the left, while on the right one finds pre-established essences, foundations and principles. In the past the left nevertheless remained dependent on a given, and this in two ways: on the one hand the old order had to be abolished, and on the other the production or the invention of *humanity* (or even of the *world* itself) implied at least an outline or a model of what had to be brought forth.

The abolition of the old order was and still is conceived as the abolition of all dependencies. This is why the great words of the left have been *freedom*, *emancipation* and *the overcoming of alienation*, to which one must add the word *equality*, without which the very ideas of humanity and collectivity would have no meaning. And yet the path to equality goes through emancipation (let us keep this word, which to this day is most often taken up by left-wing discourses). The idea of emancipation has the advantage of foregrounding the need to break out of a state of tutelage or dependence (in Rome this was a legal act by which a master could take slaves out of servitude and set them free). One easily gets a sense of the importance of this idea when one thinks of all that traversed the movements concerning “nationality” of the nineteenth century, then all the former colonies that fought for their independence, as well as all the emancipations of art, customs and thought that marked the twentieth century.

In the twenty-first century, we have no doubt arrived at what one might call the ideological dominance of an emancipation that, in a rather paradoxical way, can

equally be invoked against political and economic oppression as it can in favour of a consumerist individualism that no longer needs spelling out. After the overthrow of the clearly identifiable tyrants or masters in 1789, other, no less powerful, masteries and tyrannies have taken their place.

The left is discovering that it is finished with the most conspicuous forms of emancipation, those that responded to given realities like the Church and the overt exploitation of labour. However, it is seeing them reappear precisely where it used to place its hope: in a number of other “opiates of the people”—which include the incessant exaltation of emancipation (“democracy,” “human rights”)—and in the limitless ways found by the conjunction of technology and capitalism to increase the yield of resources, including what we call “human” resources. Whether one thinks of a child in India who is destined for exhausting, miserably-paid work, or of a middle manager in France cracking under ever-increasing pressure from above: in both cases this can go as far as suicide, and in both cases too, existence is defined as pure despair.

VIII

“Despair” and “distress” are words that today express the dominant mood of the left which still wants to be the left but, for the above reasons, knows it no longer is.

However, from these reasons there emerges a very strong argument —not for re-launching or renewing the left, as we have been doing for two centuries, but for posing this simple question: if it is not only a matter of “emancipating” a “humanity” whose form we think we can discern, nor of identifying this “humanity” with the product of a self-production, then what is at stake?

Perhaps it is a question of thinking otherwise than in terms of the “human.” Heidegger writes that “Humanism [...] does not set the *humanitas* of the human being high enough”;² Levinas calls for a “humanism of the other man”;³ Deleuze speaks of “becoming-woman,” “becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible”;⁴ Derrida affirms that “Man has always been his proper end, that is, the end of his proper.”⁵ Here begins the path that must now be opened up.

Despite all the truths they contain, what is lacking in the philosophies of humanity—the “humanisms” as we say (which is usually put in the singular, implying

that we know for sure what the “human” is)—is an understanding of the fact that the modern anthropological and metaphysical mutation delivers man entirely to himself and, moreover, delivers to him the totality of the world or of worlds.

It is not that the Human is some kind of given power to which we must submit or in which we must place our trust, since it has clearly shown its capacity to destroy, humiliate, starve and crush any being, human or otherwise, that does not correspond to the increasingly strained management⁶ of this Production which can pretend only with embarrassment and bad conscience to be the production of something like “human happiness” or a “total human.”

But it is precisely in this way that the human is delivered over to itself: it finally becomes overwhelmingly clear that neither “salvation” [*salut*] in a beyond nor the production of an ultimate totality is capable of representing the sense of an existence which, precisely, makes sense in as much as it exists. In the same way, it becomes evident that the existences of all the beings in the world co-exist and it is only in their coexistence that the sense of the world resides; there is no other.

The human is the being whose sense, now that every other possibility of sense has either been abolished or consigned to the order of archaic postures (whether these be “spiritualities,” “asceticisms” or “heroisms”), has become its existence, and the sense of the world as a whole has become its own animal, vegetable, mineral and cosmic existence.

Pascal, who knew all this thanks to his acute sensibility for the mutation that was already under way, said that “The human infinitely surpasses the human.” If I may gloss Pascal in this way, this means that humans are neither creatures of God nor their own creation. The human is the infinite in actuality or, if one prefers, he is the expression of—or witness to—this infinite in actuality that we call “the world,” or “worlds,” which is to say of the elementary and vertiginous fact that there is what there is and that we are here.

One might say that the right refers to orders, givens and constraints under which one can play some kind of game of production: which is to say, in truth, of the reproduction of constraints until the game is exhausted, the self-production of wealth and technics to the point of revealing that the infinite is replaced by the indefinite, by what is never finished or finite [*fini*] enough. Meanwhile, the need to have needs is carefully articulated with the cynical maintenance of poverty, which

is deficient inasmuch as it falls short of need in a state of distress and deprivation.

The left is truly what it is when it understands that the right refuses to consider that we are here and the world is here and, on the contrary, affirms the existence of natural or supernatural constraints which, when used to their fullest degree, allow one to play the game of an emancipation, not of human beings but of the mechanisms of indefinite production.

The left is truly what it is when it says: *we are here, the world is here*, there is no other given than the spatiality of this “we are.” “To be on the left” thus means, just as it meant originally without us knowing it: we are here, the world is here, and nothing else is given. In a sense, there is no emancipation to be sought because no domination is given. This is not to deny what we know about tyranny, the arbitrary use of power and exploitation, but to affirm that these are not founded in any kind of necessity. There is no necessity; the fact that the world exists and that humans exist in it is not a necessity. It is a chance and a risk, a game of dice thrown by a child, as the Greeks said. Even, and perhaps above all, for theology, the existence (the creation) of the world is not and cannot be a necessity; to claim the opposite would deny its own status as theology.

IX

It is therefore only by refusing to recognise any given or necessity, and at the same time abandoning the Production of the Human and the World that the left can embrace its original sense: the side of that which gives neither guarantee nor foundation—the side of the world that discovers itself quite simply as its own sense, as neither producible nor appropriable but “infinitely surpassing” everything we represent as “sense.”

Some will of course say that we are now far from the “right-left” question and that everything has evaporated in the fog of metaphysics. But this is precisely the point: the “right-left” division was not only the point of departure for a new politics, society or morality and so on. Indeed, it expressed a much deeper reality, not of historical progress or regression, but the opening of another history that does not proceed from a given seed and has no necessary fruit, one that delivers the world—cosmos, nature, forces and forms—entirely over to the responsibility of the human as an indeterminate and indefinite being who is just as capable of transforming everything into a product or “added value” as it is of infinitely ex-

ceeding itself beyond any product or value in a burst of sense.

As impracticable or unrealistic as all this may sound, it is the truth: if the “left” does not start concerning itself with “sense,” there will be neither left nor right but only variations on the theme of production that will end up as the production of nothingness. For sense is never produced: it takes place, it passes, it occurs. And it does not happen indifferently between right and left; it opens the difference between the two sides on the basis of which one must orient oneself and therefore decide.

POSTSCRIPT⁷

The above text was written in 2011 for the Italian magazine *MicroMega*. If six years later it seemed appropriate for me to pass it to *Lignes*, I did so because I believed it in part to be topical, as one says, or at least it had been topical for a long while—and its future remains obscure but, up until now at least, open, possible, a demand even. Nevertheless, this obscurity has increased over the last nine years. The slogan “neither left nor right,” an old fascist slogan that is often “apolitical” (as if this term had anything but a right wing meaning), has become, or is at least supposed to be, a respectable political watchword. This respectability is so fragile, however, that it is even criticised on the right, where certain individuals affirm, in opposition to this dubious and miserable “neither...nor,” the overcoming or the sublimation of divisions in the name of a supposed national unity.

After reading my text, Mathilde Girard suggested that the “left-right” couplet could be understood in terms of the opposition between “impossible” and “possible.” I agree with her entirely: this is a way of naming what I was trying to say when I opposed given constraints, which are accepted at the expense of sense, to the demand of justice, which even when regulative remains imperative.

Justice—which Derrida describes as “undeconstructible”—is an impossible demand or a demand for the impossible in the very precise sense that it is not a matter of the possible. To do justice to someone (to a “person,” a “singularity”) or a group (a “people” or a “class”) does not presuppose that we can clearly present what is due to it. This becomes obvious as soon as one thinks about the question of or the criteria for this “is due to”: for what? For merit, work, existence? And to whom? To the citizen, the human being, the existent? How are we even to determine the meaning of these terms?

It is utterly illusory to believe that we can satisfy ourselves with significations that are acceptable, commonplace, or even those produced as a result of public debate. Today, from Habermas to Sandel, we are seeing an ever-renewed appeal to this idea of “public debate.” This appeal completely misses the fact that opinion is subject in advance to the most commonplace and most confused significations. This is why—to use a word whose signification remains uncertain—any *political* thinking, and thus any political action, must initially be philosophical. Since philosophy is only what it is when exposed to the Platonic “beyond being,” this thought takes place beyond any given, recognisable or appropriable sense. In this way philosophy creates nothing, but instead attempts to give voice to what weaves its way silently and obscurely through the deep movements of history.

The left is nothing less than the gesture that keeps open not a utopian ideal but *justice* as the irrepressible demand to maintain *the sense of sense*: neither happiness nor harmony, but an incalculable value that is both unproducible and unproductive. Is it possible to say that this has been betrayed? The answer must be an affirmative one as soon as one thinks that human rights have always been those of property owners, then of citizens or of whichever category of people was legitimated by the powers that be, but never those of human beings (considered, moreover, in terms of their connections with all other forms of existence). There is no doubt that in each case there has been a degree of manoeuvring and the diversion of a movement or an energy, but at the same time, what has made the betrayal possible is the maintenance of the obscurity around the nature of the demand for justice, of how it is a matter neither of the given nor of the possible (which always emanates from the given). This itself belongs not just to the logic of accumulation, appropriation and domination, but also to that of the production and the self-production of humanity.

Today we are perhaps beginning to realise that what we have produced is our exponential dependence on *production itself*, and moreover that we have produced ourselves according to this production. It is not solely a matter of the ownership of the means of production, but of the creation of its ends that cannot retroactively bear on its means. Now the only possible ends are indefinite ones, not that “finality without end” which is nevertheless the “proper” [*le propre*] of humanity if not of the whole world.

Above all—yes, more than anything—the left must learn that the thought of the possible runs counter to its deepest truth, and that the thought of the impossible

is neither utopian nor an irresponsible prediction but instead its touchstone and driving force. When Rousseau said that democracy was possible only for a people of gods, he entrusted us with the impossible. Perhaps he placed more faith in human beings than it seems.

NOTES

1. The range of the French *sinistre* has a broader semantic range than in English. When used as an adjective, it can also mean gloomy or dull, and as a noun refers to damage, devastation or harm.
2. Martin Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism,'" in *Pathmarks*, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 251.
3. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Humanisme de l'autre homme* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1972); *Humanism of the Other*, trans. Nidra Poller (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003).
4. Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis & London: University Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 232, 248.
5. Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 134 (translation modified).
6. TN: In English in original.
7. TN: This postscript was written for the French publication of the essay in *Lignes* (2017).