

Derrida, Phenomenology and Death

Chung Chin-Yi

Phenomenology has not seen its death, despite being now consigned to its place as a historical movement in philosophy, encompassing Husserl, Sartre, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenology took the form of transcendental idealism with Husserl and arguably took a more existentialist turn with Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Contemporary staple textbooks on phenomenology by Dermot Moran (*Introduction to Phenomenology*) and Simon Glendinning (*In the Name of Phenomenology*) describe Derrida's intervention with Husserl's phenomenology as a form of destruction or disruption. Simon Glendinning has argued that phenomenology is an essentially unfinished project, which has been interrupted and radicalised by Derrida's intervention. This paper will however, argue that Derrida's intervention is not an interruption but a thinking of the conditions of possibility for phenomenology and its production through his concepts of iterability and differance and indeed these concepts are a continuation of phenomenology through a logical extension of the notion of intentionality. Dermot Moran has described phenomenology as having a 'thoroughly modernist outlook' in its critical stance of the scientific world view. According to Moran, phenomenology formally began with Husserl but was subsequently transformed by what he terms 'Husserlian heresies' as Sartre, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty broke with Husserl's method of phenomenological reduction. Furthermore, Moran asserts that phenomenology has met a violent death and collapsed with Derrida's critique of presence and the possibility of intentional meaning. Contrary to this assertion, this paper will argue that Derrida's concepts of differance and iterability are actually a continuation of phenomenology's legacy by extrapolating the logical consequences of intentionality. Derrida's intervention does not, as Glendinning argues, interrupt phenomenology, or as Moran argues, destroy phenomenology, but questions the very conditions of possibility for phenomenology and accounts for its mode of production through his concepts of iterability and differance. Mohanty on the other hand is a leading Husserlian scholar who argues that Derrida has misinterpreted Husserl with his readings of iterability and repetition. According to Mohanty, Derrida has construed repetition as the nominalistic and endless deferral of ideal meaning.

This is where I disagree with Mohanty's interpretation as well, as I do not regard Derrida as a nominalist or an empiricist. Derrida argues that ideality has to be constituted by repetition, but does not in any way elevate the nominal or empirical over the ideal but maintains the dynamic relationship between them as differance. Mohanty argues that Husserl's notion of repetition should rather be interpreted as the eidetic grasping of the transcendental. But the question remains as to *how* this eidetic grasping is

possible. Can the transcendental be grasped without mediation by the empirical? Mohanty has side-stepped the question by renaming repetition as eidetic grasping, but has not answered the question about the conditions of possibility for this eidetic grasping which Derrida's notion of iterability addresses. While Mohanty is generally kinder to Derrida in writing that he does not regard Derrida's intervention as a destruction of phenomenology, indeed he calls Derrida a Husserlian as much as any other Husserlian, I do not agree with his assessment of Derrida's reading of Husserl being misleading in its turn to nominalism. I would like to argue contrary to this strain of argument against Derrida made by leading phenomenologists such as Mohanty, Moran and Sokolowski in my thesis, that Derrida's intervention is a turn to empiricism or nominalism which I do not think it is, instead arguing that Derrida's move is a rethinking of the conditions of possibility of ideality through his concepts of differance and iterability. Derrida's intervention is really a continuation of phenomenology rather than an interruption of it through extending intentionality to its logical consequences to derive the notions of differance and iterability. How is thought possible? How is being made to appear to consciousness? How does thought present itself to consciousness? Can thought escape mediation in its appearance to consciousness? Does not the separation of the transcendental and empirical, especially in the act of phenomenological reduction, result in an aporia of their non-correlation? Must phenomenology be either transcendental or empirical? Is it not the neither and the between (the quasi-transcendental) that enables phenomenology by joining it in an economy? In all its configurations prior to Derrida, phenomenology has upheld a transcendental-empirical distinction which either resulted in a system of transcendental idealism (Husserl) or empirical idealism (Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty).

The prevailing reception of Derrida from the phenomenological field is, as mentioned earlier, that he has disrupted or destroyed phenomenology in critiquing the metaphysics of presence, which leads him to privilege the empirical in place or absence and differance. The critics of Derrida from phenomenology such as Mohanty, Moran and Sokolowski regard themselves as phenomenological purists. Their criticisms however, are based essentially on a misreading of Derrida by classifying him as a nominalist and empiricist. They also regard Derrida as a relativist, another misconception I wish to contend. Derrida examines the conditions of possibility for the Absolute, he does not overthrow or abdicate the absolute. A close reading of *Introduction to Origin of Geometry* for instance, will demonstrate that Derrida does not dispute the transcendental but examines the conditions for its transmission through history, which he calls *Ruckfrage* or re-activation. The transcendental is brought to life through differance and iterability, it is the iteration of the noema that ensures its transmission through history, the ideal must be repeated with a difference in order to be grasped by consciousness, and indeed the ideal exists only in and through consciousness. Pure thought is always delay through its transmission through time, enabled by the differance of its signification through time. The transcendental is really differance,

enabled in its transmission through history by *Ruckfrage* or re-activation. A true reading of the transcendental takes into account not only *Korper* (ideality constituting sense) but *Leib* (sense constituting ideality), indeed *Leib* is the condition of possibility for the transcendental and ensures its continuation and transmission through history. As Derrida argues, without its historical incarnation, the transcendental would not be communicated through the passage of time and history to reach its re-activation from the past to project itself into the future, and the 'to come'. Derrida's account thus is an examination of the conditions in which ideality is transmitted through the passage of time and history, it is not in any way, a relativism or a nominalism. As Derrida argues, historical incarnation sets free the transcendental instead of binding it by reducing it to empiricism, it is the condition for its transmission through time, through iterability and differance. Derrida does not reduce phenomenology to empiricism, but does meta-phenomenology by examining the conditions of possibility for phenomenology's production, which is the act of *Ruckfrage*, re-activation, or iterability of the transcendental in the empirical. Derrida also questions the irreducible basis of axioms when he mentions Godel's undecidability theorem in relation to Husserl's ideal axioms. This factor of undecidability adds a factor of contingency to the ideal object. Axioms acquire their ideal status through sedimentation, but rather than reduce history which Husserl regards as adding to the contingency of the ideal object, such as adding to their true or false status and hence their undecidability, Derrida argues that the historicity of the ideal object and its sedimentations are essential to its transmission through differance and iterability. The undecidability of an axiom according to Derrida is not something which is reducible but essential in its very constitution as its condition for transmission through history. Undecidability is intrinsic to an axiom rather than separable from it.

Damien Byers, in his book *Intentionality and Transcendence: Closure and Openness in Husserl's Phenomenology*, likewise accuses Derrida of misreading Husserl in identifying retention and protention as non-presences which demonstrate that ideality is constituted by repetition of the present in the non-present. His method of arguing against Derrida is to say that such displacements of past and future are not identities and thus essentially not repetitions, thus making non-presence non-complicit in the constitution of presence. Byers further argues that the past and future are not displacements but continuities constituted by the transcendence of the present. It is a contradictory argument to say the least. First Byers argues that retention and protention are not identities or repetitions of the present. Then Byers argues that these so called displacements are essentially continuities. How does this not contradict his own claim that the past and future are not identities through repetition? His disputation of Derrida's powerful claim that retention and protention introduce non-presences into the constitution of presence simply does not stand upon close examination. Indeed a reading of his critique powerfully reinforces the strength of Derrida's reading of Husserl's

own notion of temporality as the introduction of difference into the constitution of the transcendental.

At the heart of phenomenology lies an aporia. This aporia is the isolation of the transcendental from the empirical which are equally conditions of possibility for phenomenology. This results in the suppression of the transcendental-empirical difference or difference which is really the condition of possibility for metaphysics as the movement of difference sustains metaphysics in an economy through iterability and repetition with a difference. The transcendental has to be mediated by the empirical rather than excluded from it. As Derrida argues, all thought is mediation. All *Gegenwartigung* is *Vergegenwartigung*, Derrida's philosophy of mediation essentially resolves the aporia of the non-correlation between the transcendental or empirical, as well as the impossibility of instituting their distinction, and acknowledges the essentiality of writing for the embodiment of the ideality in place of speech which leads to phonocentrism. As Derrida argues, the Idea is nothing outside the history in which it displays itself. Phenomenology must acknowledge its historicity as a condition of its ideality. Through his concept of difference, Derrida explores the contamination and inseparability of the transcendental and empirical. The transcendental is really difference; it is the difference between the transcendental and empirical, the spacing and temporization between them which is a nothing that produces the transcendental and empirical in an economy which sustains metaphysics, and Derrida is interested in this difference or trace which is truly the condition of possibility for phenomenology rather than solely the transcendental. As Derrida argues, the very possibility of the transcendental reduction is enabled by the nothing that separates the transcendental and empirical, or difference. Derrida's post-phenomenology thus saves phenomenology by acknowledging its very condition of possibility - difference, death and non-presence. This paper starts off from acknowledging the aporia that lies at the heart of phenomenology - the non-correlation of the transcendental and the empirical exacerbated by the phenomenological reduction, and proceeds to investigate how Derrida's post-phenomenology addresses or posits a resolution to this aporia through his notions of the quasi-transcendental, iterability and difference which are logical extensions of Husserl's notion of intentionality rather than any radical departure from it.

David Cerbone, in *Understanding Phenomenology*, describes phenomenology as an effort to define the essential structures of consciousness, thus becoming a transcendental enterprise. But does the transcendental exist in a vacuum? Derrida will argue that the transcendental does not exist apart from the empirical; the transcendental has to be mediated by the empirical through repetition or iterability. The transcendental is the empirical. There is no difference between the transcendental and empirical subject, because the transcendental subject is the empirical subject, and the difference that separates them is precisely this difference that is nothing. In *Positions*, Derrida states that the distinction between signified and signifier becomes problematical the moment one acknowledges there is no

transcendental signified. Derrida argues that the concept of the sign (signifier .signified) carries within itself the necessity of privileging the phonic substance, leading to the reduction of the exteriority of the signifier, of which signifier and signified are two parts of the same concept or unity. In other words, the signified does not exist, neither does the signifier as it seems to erase itself, what persists is the infinite trace that is the play of differences within writing as differance which is the differal and deferral of meaning within the text. The acknowledgement that the signifier is not exterior - which leads to the reduction of writing - leads to the acknowledgement that there never has been anything but writing, the transcendental and the empirical are part of the same text, essentially the same, nothing separates them, but the infinite trace that is the nothing that separates the transcendental and empirical leads to the signifying of other traces and other differances and differences within the system, so that translation means not transportation of signified to signifiers, but transformation of the discursive signs to signify within the same text of the transcendental and the empirical to signify in a different language, playing on the differences between the two languages but appropriating the master signifiers and transforming them to signify anew in the new language as sense, or the signified, has never been determinate in the first place. According to Derrida, the principle of difference puts every signified concept into the position of signifier, because, in its very nature as a concept, it must be related to both its phonic substance and the other signified concepts in its system. The individuation of a concept thus refers to both its signified (and by implication, the other signifiers of the language) and its associative and syntagmatic relations with other concepts. Constituted by this system of references, and by it alone, the signified concept becomes a sign of a sign: writing. The trace precedes the conceptual opposition of the transcendental and empirical, as it is that hypothetical moment in which differentiation, or differance, emerges. The trace, or differance, expends itself through the elaboration of oppositions. It refers us from sign to sign, signifier to signified, and since we cannot locate the origin of the trace (for it is only by means of the trace that things can originate, and become instituted), we cannot escape from signs into the originary moment of the transcendental signified. The trace is neither simply a signifier nor a signified, thus we run into difficulties when we try to conceive such a science from within the presently dominant horizon of logocentrism, which maintains a strict distinction between the signifier and the signified. To trace back the conditions of possibility for logocentrism and presence Derrida directs us to the movement of differance, which is the nothing that enables both the transcendental and empirical in the movement of its differentiating trace, and thus moves us away from a metaphysics of presence as it is not the transcendental but the arche-trace and differance which enables the production of metaphysics through iterability.

Derrida however, is not, as Dermot Moran argues, a skeptic, a relativist or an empiricist. Derrida posits the iterability as the condition of possibility for the transcendental by mediating it through the empirical and allowing it

to come into being. Derrida does not thus, negate the transcendental, only positing that it must be repeated as the empirical in iterability. Derrida's post-phenomenology does not threaten phenomenology, indeed, it is a continuation of it as differance and iterability are logical extensions of Husserl's concept of intentionality. But there exist real threats to phenomenology which Derrida's post-phenomenology does address. Simon Glendinning has discussed the threat that looms over phenomenology as phenomenism. In positing consciousness as the ground and condition of possibility of thought, indeed phenomenology, especially Husserl's, does run the risk of claiming, like phenomenism, that everything can be reduced to and is constituted by consciousness. Another threat that thus hovers over phenomenology is solipsism. Husserl's Cartesianism and Heidegger's privileging of human being and solitude as authenticity does indeed privilege a transcendental subjectivity that is elevated over the Other, which Levinas' and Derrida's later reconfigurations of phenomenology will address. It is the argument of this thesis that the threats of phenomenism and solipsism in phenomenology are precisely what Derrida addresses in his post-phenomenology with his positing of the quasi-transcendental and iterability. Tom Rockmore, in *In Kant's Wake*, characterizes Derrida as a skeptic who makes knowledge impossible as every argument undercuts definite reference and no argument can suffice to pick objects out through words. As previously argued with Glendinning and Moran, I will argue that such characterizations of Derrida as a skeptic and nihilist who violently ends phenomenology are mistaken as Derrida merely examines the conditions of possibility for phenomenology and reconfigures it to acknowledge these conditions for metaphysical production. Derrida does not, in any way, destroy phenomenology. Indeed, Derrida continues phenomenology's legacy through his notions of iterability and differance which are derived from Husserl's concept of intentionality.

Hence this paper will argue, contrary to Glendinning, Rockmore, Mohanty and Moran, that phenomenology does not meet a violent death in Derrida. Derrida's intervention saves phenomenology by addressing the aporias that are intrinsic to it. Derrida wishes to address, not Husserl's transcendental leanings, but the closure of metaphysics it produces by suppressing differance in privileging presence and shutting down that difference and deferral, or differance, that maintains the economy of both the transcendental and empirical. Yet at the heart of phenomenology lies an inescapable death and ineradicable non-self-presence that constitutes it and gives rise to metaphysical production. This death is the non-presence or absence, the nothing which gives rise to both the transcendental and empirical in a movement of differentiating traces; its name being differance, the nothing of spacing between the transcendental and empirical which gives rise to the difference and deferral that produces both the transcendental and empirical through a movement of traces. In *Introduction to Origin of Geometry*, Derrida negotiates a middle ground between Platonism and historicism. Kant had succumbed to Platonism through his eradication of history from the

transcendental, while Husserl, through his reduction of factual historicity to arrive at the eidetic origin of Geometry, likewise risks negating history which is the exemplar for the ideal and succumbing to Platonism. In place, Derrida argues that the ideal is tradition, and the Absolute is passage. Derrida does not succumb to historicism as he maintains the existence of the transcendental which is enabled only through its iterability or repeatability, but argues that this transcendental must be reactivated through iterability and history, the transcendental must be repeated as the empirical to form the quasi-transcendental. Derrida argues that historicity and differance, the transmission of the ideal through iterability and writing, is a condition of possibility for the ideal. In *Introduction to Origin of Geometry* for instance, Derrida discusses Husserl's description of the first geometer's founding act of geometry as an act which has taken place 'once' and is inaugurated for the 'first time', thus becoming institutive and creative. How does phenomenology then transmit and reproduce itself? Derrida answers that it is through the iteration of a noema, the act of phenomenological reduction is reactivating and noetic by repeating the ideal in the empirical. Derrida thus writes of a relation of dependence between the repeated phenomena and the reactivated origin- this relation between the transcendental and empirical will eventually be coined as differance. Iterability and history is thus the condition of possibility of the ideal. Yet this iteration of origin gives rise to an aporia - how is transcendental correlative to the empirical? Are they the same and is there any difference between them since they are distinct? This is the fundamental paradox of phenomenology, the transcendental is not the empirical, they are distinct, and yet the transcendental must be repeated as the empirical, the empirical is what brings the transcendental into being, and the difference which separates the transcendental and empirical is the difference which is nothing, or differance. This thesis will examine differance and the quasi-transcendental as Derrida's argument for addressing the aporia of the relationship between the transcendental and empirical. Against the current scholarship that deems Derrida's intervention as a disruption or a destruction I would like to argue that Derrida's phenomenology is essentially a continuation of Husserl's notion of intentionality through his concepts of iterability and differance, indeed it is nothing but extending Husserl's notion of intentionality to its logical conclusion rather than being any grave disruption of Husserl.

The presence of the subject is formed, according to Derrida, in auto-affectation, in the process of differance:

The subject, and first of all conscious and speaking subject, depends upon the system of differences and the movement of differance, that the subject is not present, nor above all present to itself before difference, that the subject is constituted only in being divided from itself, in becoming space, in temporizing, in deferral (Positions, 41)

In other words, the separation created by auto-affectation produces the presence of the subject. Essential, however, in Derrida's philosophy is that the subject does not precede auto-affectation in the form of presence, but rather

auto-affection produces the subject. (SP 92) According to Derrida, the sense in the statement 'I am' is that I am a mortal, in other words, I am constituted in relation to my own absence. I am constituted in the present as present, specifically in the very relationship to the past which no longer is. 'I am alive' in so far as I die every moment in every auto-affection. 'I am alive' is born in auto-affection, where I reflect my absence and produce myself as a trace, which refers to a past which no longer exists. At the heart of auto-affection and the presencing of oneself to oneself in hearing oneself speak is thus an introduction of death, non-presence and absence into the constitution of being as presence. The very act of hearing-oneself-speak presumes a need for signs, and thus solitary mental life needs indicative signs to communicate oneself. Thus absence and the empirical have invaded solitary mental life, which cannot be reduced to pure expressive signs or ideality. At the heart of life is death. Death and non-presence is the condition of possibility for life. Death constitutes life, it is the impossible possibility that enables life.

Derrida writes of death that lies at the heart of phenomenology in *Speech and Phenomena*. He argues, for instance, that phenomenology is tormented, if not contested from within, by its own descriptions of the movement of temporalization and of the constitution of intersubjectivity. At the heart of what ties together these decisive moments of description is an irreducible nonpresence as having a constituting value, and with it a non-life, a non-presence, or nonself-belonging of the living present, an ineradicable non-primordially. (SP 6-7) This death that lies at the heart of phenomenology constituting the present is the difference which is nothing, the differance, or *Vergegenwärtigung* and *Appresentation*, which bifurcates the a priori and aligns it simultaneously with non-presence and absence. This nothing is the trace of all repeatable traces which is the constituting value for presence, all productions and reproductions of presence arise out of this spacing or interval between the transcendental and empirical which Derrida calls differance. It is the repetition of the transcendental in the empirical in iterability which arises out of this nothing, or death, differance, the spacing or temporization between the transcendental and empirical, which produces metaphysics and sustains it through repetition with a difference.

In *Of Grammatology* Derrida writes of the death of the book and the beginning of writing. The death of the book is the death of univocal and absolute meaning, for as Derrida argues, there is 'nothing outside the text.', with the effacing of the transcendental signified. In its place Derrida argues that every signified is already in a position of signifier, it is the trace and the movement of traces in a production of differences in writing that produces meaning. It is the iterability between the transcendental and empirical and the differance between them which is nothing that gives rise to meaning. At the heart of phenomenology thus lies an inescapable death which produces it—this death is the non-presence and nothing of differance which gives rise to the production of the transcendental and empirical through iterability and writing. Death, or differance, is the nothing that conditions and produces life, and the phenomenological reduction to suppress differance and arrive at pure

presence thus lands phenomenology in an aporia by excluding life's condition of possibility- which is death.

Today Phenomenology risks being eclipsed by later developments in philosophy, such as the burgeoning of analytic philosophy and analytic accounts of metaphysics and epistemology or philosophy of mind and philosophy of social sciences. Moran has also argued that phenomenology has been superseded by deconstruction and post-structuralism, another point which I disagree with. Derrida's intervention was a reconfiguration of, not a destruction of phenomenology. It is the argument of this thesis that Derrida's intervention is a step towards reconfiguring phenomenology to make it of contemporary relevance by bringing it to acknowledge its historicity as a condition of possibility for its ideality. There is no ideality without repeatable, repeated marks. Ideality is constituted by repeatability and history which is the equivalent of difference. Derrida puts repeatability and difference together together to get difference. Iterability is the condition of possibility of history and metaphysics as the ideal needs to be exemplified in order to come into being. As Derrida argues in the *Introduction to Origin of Geometry*, the historicity of geometry, the pure possibility of truth's appearance, is not a Platonic entity that exists outside of history. It is dependent on the fact of empirical history, of which it is the essence, for its appearance, and like any other phenomenological sense, its being is what it gives itself to be in history. As Derrida puts it, "The Absolute is passage". The transcendental is mediated through empirical history to come into being; there is no ideality without historicity. Science or empiricism is thus not excluded in post-phenomenology but made the condition of possibility for the representation of the ideal. Dermot Moran has characterized phenomenology as 'a way of doing philosophy' marked by having a 'thoroughly modernist outlook' (Moran 3). Moran argues that the modernist outlook of phenomenology is inseparable from its attempt to develop a 'critique of the effect of the natural scientific outlook on human being in the world.' (Moran 309). Derrida's account bridges metaphysical idealism and naturalist science, positing the relation between them as iterability or the empirical representation of the transcendental. Phenomenology thus moves away from being merely an anti-scientific or modernist philosophy to a philosophy which examines the conditions of possibility for ideality or traditional metaphysics- iterability and the empirical in Derrida's post-phenomenology.

What Derrida's reconfiguration of phenomenology saves phenomenology from is phenomenalism and solipsism. Specifically this post-phenomenology is a reconfiguration of Husserl's phenomenology to save it from all the above problems by enabling phenomenology to acknowledge its historicity. Husserl, through his repudiation of history and naturalism, had in fact landed phenomenology in an aporia by negating the act of repetition that constitutes the ideal. Sartre, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty had returned phenomenology to the empirical or the things themselves, Sartre through intentionality that repudiated that the transcendental ego exists over and above consciousness, Heidegger through his concept of being-in-the-world or

a return to ontology over metaphysics, and Merleau-Ponty through his suggestion of the intertwining of mind and body or the transcendental and empirical. Yet in doing so phenomenology was thus reconfigured by them into empirical idealism, which Derrida's radicalisation of phenomenology overcomes by acknowledging the economy of both the transcendental and empirical. Phenomenology was an investigation into the constitution of human consciousness, the ego and perception, and the conditions that made thought possible. As a philosophical discipline, it exercised a profound influence on both Levinas and Derrida, who took on its presuppositions to rework them anew in their thought by expanding phenomenology to include what it had previously excluded- the 'Other' and the empirical. The thrust of post-phenomenology is essentially not negation of it as an enterprise but an expansion of it to include difference, absence and the empirical, and it will be asked if this move was necessary to save phenomenology as an enterprise.

Traditionally conceived, the transcendental is that which conditions knowledge and perception in phenomenology by giving it the properties of space and time. Tradition has posited the transcendental as the condition of possibility of the empirical, from Plato's Forms to Aristotle's *morphe* and Kant's synthetic a priori. The Transcendental in philosophy is that which goes beyond (transcends) empiricism and denotes the sphere of metaphysics or the ideal which transcends the empirical. The word transcendental means 'going beyond', based on its Latin root, *transcendere*, to climb or go beyond, from *trans* and *scando*. In Husserl's thought, the transcendental is the ground of the empirical, and the transcendental ego which consciousness must be reduced to is the absolute that grounds consciousness and conditions our knowledge and perception of objects by uniting them in continuous unities of space and time. The transcendental is what is experienced in order to ascertain the *a priori* fundamental principles or structuring processes of all knowledge. A quasi-transcendental, as will be examined in this thesis, is a form of transcendental which goes beyond idealism to constitute the infrastructural economy of both the transcendental and empirical, presence and absence, being and non-being. It does not in this sense, repudiate idealism but goes beyond it to acknowledge the infrastructural dialectic that constitutes philosophy and which grounds philosophy as its condition of possibility.

Positing the transcendental as the condition of possibility of the empirical has led to a logocentrism, or the privileging of presence. The condition of possibility for metaphysics, as argued by this paper, is not the transcendental but the quasi-transcendental. The quasi-transcendental in Derrida's thought functions as the condition of possibility of knowledge through iterability or the exemplification of the transcendental in the empirical. The question posed by this paper is if the reconfiguration of philosophy by the positing of the quasi-transcendental solves the problem of the contradiction brought about by dichotomizing and reifying the transcendental and empirical. This contradiction is the *aporia* of non-correlation and distinctness, which Husserl indeed, repeatedly institutes through his act of phenomenological reduction. It will be asked if

phenomenological reduction is a necessary move to arrive at true conditions of knowledge or an act which lands philosophy in a dead end by expelling its very conditions of possibility.

Derrida traces the conditions of possibility for logocentrism by exceeding the text in locating the point of exteriority and transcending its totality. This he does by coining the term *differance*, which describes the point of interaction between philosophy and empiricism, or philosophy and non-philosophy. In *Speech and Phenomena*, Derrida discusses *differance*:

We must be referred to an order, then, that resists philosophy's founding opposition between the sensible and the intelligible. The order that resists this opposition, that resists it because it sustains it, is designated in a movement of *differance* (with an a) between two differences or between two letters. This *differance* belongs neither to voice nor to writing in the ordinary sense, and it takes place, like the strange space that will assemble us here for the course of an hour, between speech and writing and beyond the tranquil familiarity that binds us to one and to the other, reassuring us sometimes in the illusion that they are two separate things. (SP 133)

Differance is the difference or spacing between the transcendental and empirical that enables metaphysics to function, it is the movement that sustains metaphysics in the repetition of the transcendental in the empirical, or iterability. It is the movement of *differance* that relates the transcendental to the empirical, and reassures us with the *illusion* that the transcendental and the empirical are two separate things. *Differance* is the difference between the transcendental and empirical which is nothing, for the transcendental can only exist through the empirical as repetition with a difference. *Differance* is the acknowledgement of the economy of conceptual oppositions of the structure within totality which is the condition of possibility for philosophy. This forges a doubling of philosophy because empiricism had been traditionally relegated to the place of supplement or absence. In place of totality, Derrida acknowledges the play between presence and absence which makes philosophy possible. By acknowledging that there is 'nothing outside the text' Derrida is democratizing philosophy by demolishing the hierarchy of representation that claims that signified, or ideal, is superior to image, or sign, because in Derrida's reading the supplement, or the sign, is interchangeable with the signified and is in fact the very condition of its possibility. The hierarchy between speech and writing also collapses as Derrida argues that 'there never has been anything but writing', there is no external referent or transcendental signified that divides representation into signifier and signified, but a chain of supplements that infinitely refer to each other. Derrida thus traces the conditions of possibility for logocentrism by acknowledging the quasi-transcendental, which is the economy of both the transcendental and empirical. The quasi-transcendental is neither transcendental nor empirical, but is the *differance*, trace, limit or spacing between the transcendental and empirical which enables metaphysics to function. It is the difference between transcendental and empirical, or

difference, which is the spacing or nothing that conditions both the transcendental and empirical in a mode of production through iterability or repetition.

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