

'We no longer consider the biography of a philosopher as a set of empirical accidents that leaves one with a name that would then itself be offered up to philosophical reading, the only kind of reading held to be philosophically legitimate. Neither readings of philosophical systems nor external empirical readings have ever in themselves questioned the dynamics of that borderline between the work and the life, between the system and the subject of the system. This borderline is neither active nor passive; it's neither outside nor inside. It is most especially not a thin line, an invisible or indivisible trait that lies between the philosophy on the one hand, and the life of an author on the other.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
THE EAR OF THE OTHER, SCHOCKEN BOOKS, 1985
L'OREILLE DE L'AUTRE
VLB EDITEUR, 1982

'The very condition of a deconstruction may be at work in the work, within the system to be deconstructed. It may already be located there, already at work. Not at the center, but in an eccentric center, in a corner whose eccentricity assures the solid concentration of the system, participating in the construction of what it, at the same time, threatens to deconstruct. One might then be inclined to reach this conclusion: deconstruction is not an operation that supervenes afterwards, from the outside, one fine day. It is always already at work in the work. Since the destructive force of Deconstruction is always already contained within the very architecture of the work, all one would finally have to do to be able to deconstruct, given this always already, is to do memory work. Yet since I want neither to accept nor to reject a conclusion formulated in precisely these terms, let us leave this question suspended for the moment.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
MEMOIRES FOR PAUL DEMAN
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1986

'Who is it that is addressing you? Since it is not an author, a narrator, or a deus ex machina, it is an I that is both part of the spectacle and part of the audience, an I that, a bit like you, undergoes its own incessant violent reinscription within the arithmetical machinery. An I that functioning as a pure passageway for operations of substitution is not some singular and irreplaceable existence, some subject or life. But only rather moves between life and death, between reality and fiction. An I that is a mere function or phantom.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
DISSEMINATION
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1981
LA DISSEMINATION
EDITIONS DU SEUIL, 1972

'There is not narcissism and non-narcissism. There are narcissisms that are more or less comprehensive, generous, open, extended. What is called non-narcissism is in general but the economy of a much more welcoming and hospitable narcissism. One that is much more open to the experience of the Other as Other. I believe that without a movement of narcissistic reappropriation, the relation to the Other would be absolutely destroyed, it would be destroyed in advance. The relation to the Other, even if it remains asymmetrical, open, without possible reappropriation, must trace a movement of reappropriation in the image of one's self for love to be possible. Love is narcissistic.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
POINTS STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1995
POINTS DE SUSPENSION, ENTRETIENS
EDITIONS GALILEE, 1992

'And I am writing here at the moment when my mother no longer recognizes me, and at which, though still capable of speaking or articulating, a little, she no longer calls me and for her and therefore for the rest of her life, I no longer have a name, that is what is happening, and when she nonetheless seems to reply to me, she is presumably replying to someone who happens to be me without her knowing it, if knowing means anything here, like the other day in Nice when I asked her if she was in pain (yes) then where? It was February 5 1989, she had in a rhetoric that could never have been hers, the audacity of this stroke about which she will alas, never know anything, no doubt knew nothing, and which, piercing the night replies to my question: I have a pain in my mother, as though she were speaking for me, both in my direction and in my place. I stop for a moment over a pang of remorse, in any case over the admission I owe the reader, in truth that I owe my mother herself for the reader will have understood that I am writing for my mother, perhaps even for a dead woman, for if I were here writing for my mother, it would be for a living mother who does not recognize her son, and I am paraphrasing here for whomever no longer recognizes me, unless it be so that one should no longer recognize me, another way of saying, another version, so that people think they finally recognize me.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
CIRCUMFESSION
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1993
CIRCUMFESSION
EDITIONS DU SEUIL. 1991

'As soon as there is the one, there is murder, wounding, traumatism. The one guards against the other, it protects itself from the other. But in the movement of this jealous violence it compromises in itself its self-otherness or self difference. The difference from within one's self, which makes it one. The one as the other. At one and the same time, but in the same time that is out of joint. The one forgets to remember itself to its self. It keeps and erases the archive of this injustice that it is, of this violence that it does. The one makes itself violence, it violates and does violence to itself. It becomes what it is, the very violence that it does to itself. The determination of the self as one is violence.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
ARCHIVE FEVER
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1996
MAL D'ARCHIVE: UNE IMPRESSION FREUDIENNE
EDITIONS GALILEE, 1995

'It's not easy to improvise, it's the most difficult thing to do. Even when one improvises in front of a camera or microphone, one ventriloquizes or leaves another to speak in one's place the schemas and languages that are already there. There are already a great number of prescriptions that are prescribed in our memory and in our culture. All the names are already preprogrammed. It's already the names that inhibit our ability to ever really improvise. One can't say what ever one wants, one is obliged more or less to reproduce the stereotypical discourse. And so I believe in improvisation and I fight for improvisation. But always with the belief that it's impossible. And there where there is improvisation I am not able to see myself. I am blind to myself. And it's what I will see, no, I won't see it. It's for others to see. The one who is improvised here, no I won't ever see him.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
UNPUBLISHED INTERVIEW, 1982

'That philosophy died yesterday, since Hegel or Marx, Nietzsche, or Heidegger, and that philosophy should still wander toward the meaning of its death, or that it has always lived knowing itself to be dying; that philosophy died one day, within history, or that it has always fed on its own agony, on the violent way it opens history by opposing itself to nonphilosophy, which is its past and its concern, its death and wellspring; that beyond the death, or dying nature of philosophy, perhaps even because of it, thought still has a future, or even, as is said today, is still entirely to come because of what philosophy has held in store; or more strangely still, that the future itself has a future all these are unanswerable questions. By right of birth, and for one time at least, these are problems put to philosophy as problems philosophy cannot resolve.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
WRITING AND DIFFERENCE
'VIOLENCE AND METAPHYSICS'
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1967
L'ECRITURE ET LA DIFFERENCE
SEUIL, 1967

'The question of the archive is not a question of the past. It is not the question of a concept dealing with the past that might already be at our disposal. An archivable concept of the archive. It is a question of the future, the question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise, and of a responsibility for tomorrow. The archive, if we want to know what that will have meant, we will only know in times to come; not tomorrow, but in times to come. Later on, or perhaps never.'

JACQUES DERRIDA
ARCHIVE FEVER
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1996
MAL D'ARCHIVE: UNE IMPRESSION FREUDIENNE
EDITIONS GALILEE, 1995

'How can another see into me, into my most secret self, without my being able to see in there myself? And without my being able to see him in me. And if my secret self, that which can be revealed only to the other, to the wholly other, to God if you wish, is a secret that I will never reflect on, that I will never know or experience or possess as my own, then what sense is there in saying that it is my secret, or in saying more generally that a secret belongs, that it is proper to or belongs to some one, or to some other who remains someone. It's perhaps there that we find the secret of secrecy. Namely, that it is not a matter of knowing and that it is there for no one. A secret doesn't belong, it can never be said to be at home or in its place. The question of the self: who am I not in the sense of who am I but rather who is this I that can say who? What is the- I and what becomes of responsibility once the identity of the I trembles in secret?'

JACQUES DERRIDA
GIFT OF DEATH
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1995
DONNER LA MORT IN L'ETHIQUE DU DON
TRANSITION, 1992

'We will wonder what he may have kept of his unconditional right to secrecy, while at the same time burning with the desire to know, to make known, and to archive the very things he concealed forever. What did he conceal even

beyond the intention to conceal? Beyond the intention to lie or to perjure. We will always wonder what, sharing with compassion in this archive fever, what may have burned of his secret passions, of his correspondences, or of his life. Burned without him, without remains and without knowledge. Without the least symptom, and without even an ash.'

JACQUES DERRIDA

ARCHIVE FEVER

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1996

MAL D'ARCHIVE: UNE IMPRESSION FREUDIENNE

EDITIONS GALILEE, 1995