

The *Reste* of Translation: Derrida and the *Remains*

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Technology Sydney
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

March 2019

Certificate of Original Authorship

I, Joel Gilberthorpe, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

This research is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program.

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Date: 25th of January 2020

Acknowledgements

I must begin by acknowledging the work of Professor Mark Evans and Professor Paula Hamilton in helping me secure my candidature to facilitate and allow me to finally submit. This thesis was first drafted at Macquarie University before being submitted in this final form at UTS, and I cannot stress enough the amazing support and assistance Mark, Paula, Timothy Laurie, and the UTS Graduate Research School have done in assisting me in completing and submitting this thesis. In particular, thank you, Paula, for your empathy, compassion, and generosity in the effort you have put into supervising me, editing and discussing, and for helping me fall in love with my project all over again.

I would also like to acknowledge my father, Jeff, for his work in being an extra set of eyes through the countless drafts and edits of each chapter, and my mother Ann for always believing in me and what I could do.

Finally, and in no means the least, I would like to acknowledge my wonderful wife Elizabeth, who put up with the years, the stress, and the rollercoaster without every questioning why I would undertake this work or ever making me feel like it was the wrong choice. And to my wonderful children, George and Vera, for never getting mad, angry or sad whenever Daddy had to cut short playing trains or reading stories. Thank you for supporting me, loving me, and reminding me of what the important things are in life.

For Liz, George and Vera

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Abstract

When Derrida describes the act of translation as both possible and impossible, he articulates a theme that runs throughout much of his work and deconstruction in general. On the one hand, Derrida is arguing that there is a certain impossibility at the heart of the event or act of translation; a perfect or complete translation would rend the sign, the writing itself, irrelevant and the text would disappear into the perfect comprehension of the meaning. Yet, importantly, Derrida does not deny that translation is also possible, that language can and does communicate something. The tension between the two helps us to understand how language works, to see the potential signifieds in the sign and to attempt to transport, to convey them across into the new language. Yet it stops short the inherent violence in the act of translation: the attempt to capture that which is foreign or different, to welcome it in as guest and seek to homogenise the text and minimise difference and otherness.

The impossibility of translation is not an isolated part of the broader work of Derrida's oeuvre or deconstruction more generally. The movement of deconstruction as it solicits, shakes, and undermines the foundational understanding of the sign is that which also leads Derrida to conclude on the impossibility of translation. Derrida's numerous engagements with the concept of translation and the numerous works by other philosophers and academics reveal the importance of translation to Derrida's work and how his quasi-transcendentals impact and influence translation studies to this day.

Where this thesis departs from the field and makes an original contribution is through its examination of Derrida's use of *reste*, in particular how Derrida explores it throughout works such as *Cinders*. If translation is, at its heart, an attempt to use totalising force on the foreign, then the cinder is what remains after the violence, after the holocaust [all is burned]. Yet, translation is ultimately a route of passage where the foreign comes as a guest, making translation a site of hospitality. The dual bind of the possibility and impossibility of translation presents itself as a decision in the Derridean sense of an undecidable. Unable to capture the sign and allow it to retain its foreignness, I argue that 'the remains' is what escapes the ethical decision between the text as singular guest and the target language of the host as the universal.

Introduction

A text only lives only if it lives *on* [*survit*], and it lives *on* only if it is *at once* translatable *and* untranslatable (Derrida 2004a, 82).

Have I constructed something like the matrix, the womb of [Genet's] text? On the basis of which one could read it, that is, re-produce it? No, I see rather (but it may still be a matrix or a grammar) a sort of dredging machine. From the dissimulated, small, closed, glassed-in cabin of a crane, I manipulate some levers and, from afar... I plunge a mouth of steel in the water. And I scrape {*racle*} the bottom, hook onto stones and algae there that I lift up in order to set them down on the ground while the water quickly falls back from the mouth. And I begin to scrape {*rader*}, to scratch, to dredge the bottom of the sea, the mother {*mer*}. I barely hear the noise of the water from the little room. The toothed matrix {*matrice dentée*} only withdraws what it can, some algae, some stones. Some bits {*morceaux*}, since it bites {*mord*}. Detached. But the remain(s) passes between its lips. You do not catch the sea. She always re-forms herself (Derrida 1986b, 204-205).

It was this epigraph that first drew me to the work of Jacques Derrida, and in particular, the question of 'the remains.' Derrida's poetic metaphor, one of many that touch upon the theme of the sea or water that he uses to describe how he conceives of interpretation, invokes the image of what is left behind, a theme that returns throughout much of his writing over his vast and influential oeuvre. I initially began with the question: could we use this concept of something left as a position or point from which to better understand the act of reading? This question drew me to the topic of translation because, more than other forms of reading or interpretation, a translation produces something both physical and conceptual. The existence of the original and the translation, or indeed the history of translations produced, reveals a way of approaching 'the remains' or parts that resist. However, I do not argue that the translation plus the remains would equal the original. Not only does this formulation overlook the very nature of iterability and change through repetition, it also presumes that 'the remains' is an object that one can know or capture. Indeed, I argue that the opposite is the case: 'the remains' is elusive and chimerical.

Translation offers much for an approach to 'the remains,' not only through the ethical demand that it entails, but also the physical mark, which I term a 'remainder effect.'

What this remainder effect reveals is not something new to the text itself, insofar as it would be some new insight into the meaning of the sign. Instead, I posit that the remainder effect comes from the decisions and ethics that take place in the translation as the translator faces the divide between the individual text and the universal practice of translating itself.

However, as a precursor, I want to make an important point about the way that I am reading Derrida throughout this thesis; specifically, my choice is to read Derrida in English as opposed to the original French. While I can read Derrida in French, I am cautious that my fluency may not be sufficient to engage with him at the standard required for a dissertation at this level. Moreover, my project connects Derrida scholarship to the field of translation studies as it exists in English, including the vast body of work on Derrida and translation that was originally published in English. Moreover, I am interested in mediating between different intellectual and disciplinary traditions. For the purposes of this mediation, establishing a broadly “agreed upon” English treatment of Derrida is important for prospective readers in translation studies.

This thesis argues that ‘the remains’ is an ethical consequence of the encounter between the host and the foreign in translation. In explicating my argument, I take up the well-known translator Lawrence Venuti’s challenge about the neglect, specifically: ‘the neglect *in translation studies of the philosophical implications and social effects that accompany every translation practice.*’ (Venuti 2003, 241, own emphasis). It is Venuti’s point which I address in this project, in focusing on the impact of the effects that accompany, reflect, and inform the act of translation.

My focus on translation is not unique, not only in terms of work undertaken on deconstruction after Derrida in a range of disciplines, nor indeed in terms of Derrida’s enquiry. Much of Derrida’s work focuses on underlying issues and tensions in translation theory, through works such as: ‘What is a Relevant Translation’ (2001), ‘Des Tours de Babel (2002a) and ‘Living On/Borderlines (2004a). Thus, for deconstruction, translation is a central field of enquiry. Indeed, one of the people central to the project to translate Derrida’s work, Peggy Kamuf, expands upon this further, explaining that ‘every text of Derrida’s touches on translation, pushes against expectations that what he is doing is translatable, in the ordinary sense’ (Kamuf 2017, 232). This push against expectations is due, in part, to the manner by which Derrida conceives of the production of meaning from signifier to signified. Derrida himself writes of how the issues that he uncovers in

translation also undermine the philosophical search for meaning, writing that '[w]ith this problem of translation we will thus be dealing with nothing less than the problem of the very passage into philosophy' (Derrida 2004b, 77). Before examining these texts in greater detail, I first outline the connection between translation and Derrida's oeuvre.

As Derrida argues, translation takes place from the very moment we have language, it finds itself at the origin of language or, to put it another way, language can only exist *because* there is translation. Language, as well as all philosophy that seeks to express or explain itself through language, is thus concerned with the act of translation (Derrida 2004b, 77). If this is the case, then what it is to 'translate' and the notion of 'translation' *per se*, has philosophical and ethical consequences for what we think of as the construction of 'meaning.' These consequences for both the philosophical and ethical construction of 'translation' follow from the fact that Western translation theory¹ is founded upon what Derrida terms 'logocentrism', a position Derrida returns to and ultimately challenges throughout his oeuvre, in particular *Of Grammatology* (1997) and *Dissemination* (2004b).

The link between translation and philosophy, specifically the metaphysics of presence, is important for several reasons. First, Derrida's works are not restricted in use to only one field or subject. Rather, I argue that these conceptual foundations are common across many fields and, as such, the process that Derrida uses when he reveals how the logic of a text is already deconstructed can be applied to other fields. Second, the above permits Derrida's questioning of the metaphysics of presence to inform the challenge he presents to traditional Western translation theory. This second point is pivotal because, as I demonstrate, Western translation theory is predicated upon similar concepts and understandings as those examined by Derrida in his reading of some of the major themes and traditions of philosophy. Finally, the notion of an ethical understanding or way of being, as explored throughout many philosophical traditions, offers a way to apply and question a similar understanding of ethics as applied to translation. While this notion of the metaphysics of presence will be explored later, for now, I understand the use of the term as the theoretical position of philosophy that focuses on and privileges understandings of existence or language as containing the full presence of 'being.' That is to say, the metaphysics which privileges presence relies upon an understanding of objects in the

¹ I use the term Western translation theory in a manner consistent with Robinson (1997) and Venuti (2009, 1-6) to describe translation theory that started with the Ancient Greeks and Romans and developed alongside Western thought and philosophy.

world, concepts, and language signs as being full of an inherent presence, with the role of philosophy to best reveal and apprehend this presence.

However, deconstruction is not the opposite of the metaphysics of presence; it does not seek to reveal and claim an inherent nihilist position, though there are accusations to this effect. Indeed, as I make clear throughout this thesis, Derrida's understanding of deconstruction does not aim to reverse the metaphysics of presence that underpins the principles of much Western translation theory. Derrida explains his position about the binary of speech and writing:

Writing is the dissimulation of the natural, primary, and immediate presence of sense to the soul within the logos. Its violence befalls the soul as unconsciousness. Deconstructing this tradition will therefore not consist of reversing it, of making writing innocent. Rather of showing why the violence of writing does not *befall* an innocent language. There is an originary violence of writing because language is first, is a sense I shall gradually reveal, writing (Derrida 1997, 37).

It is pertinent to note that when encountering the opposition of original language to derivative writing, Derrida does not seek to invert the binary by privileging writing. Rather, he contends that the opposition, the very attempt to distinguish between an original or natural language and writing, is itself flawed. Derrida deconstructs this opposition when he argues that the violence associated with writing (by theorists such as Plato, Saussure, and Husserl) can be understood as true for all forms of language. Thus, there is no natural or original language.

Nonetheless, Derrida's deconstruction is about more than a reordering of the hierarchical binaries that constitute a text or logic. Rather, all the terms he uses – sometimes termed 'quasi-transcendentals' (Gasche 1986; Bennington 1999; Anderson 2012) – defy attempts of categorisation or simplistic definitions. Derrida reveals that the binary between speech and writing is already and always undermined and undone in its reliance upon a stable hierarchy, in order to reveal how logocentric thought develops out of the privileging of the assumed proximity of speech to truth over the secondariness of writing. Likewise, I aim to reveal that any translation theory that proclaims to reveal a 'truth' in the original text to be translated, thereby reducing all other readings as secondary or incorrect, perpetuates this same issue of logocentrism. In claiming a correct or pure meaning, some translation theories construct a binary between 'truth' and 'misreading' or non-truth. This

binary manifests itself in translation theory through concepts such as ‘origin’ and ‘phonocentrism.’ The links between translation and metaphysics of presence that Derrida discusses in relation to logocentrism will be made clear through exploring these conceptual underpinnings of Western translation theory. This connection between translation and the metaphysics of presence is pivotal to my argument regarding the importance of the remains.

Before continuing further, I make some preliminary remarks in order to frame the direction this thesis takes, specifically how I conceive of Western translation theory. There are many ways that the field of translation theory has been understood and framed, which I broadly categorise as either historical or conceptual. The latter is evident in the work of Peter Newmark (1988), through the way he organises and explains what he considers to be the key theories in translation theory into two parts: those that focus on the source language (SL), the language the text is currently in, and those that focus on the target language (TL), the language into which it is to be translated. Newmark notes four distinct strategies that focus on the SL: word-for-word translation (which focuses on translating one word at a time regardless of the context of the sentence); literal translation (in which the words are translated to the nearest equivalent, again one at a time); faithful (which focuses on the contextual meaning of the sentence, though it strives to keep the original expressions intact regardless of any awkward feel that may develop as a result); and finally semantic (which differs from a faithful translation as it takes account of the aesthetic quality of the original and seeks to reproduce this in addition to the meaning, rather than meaning at the expense of this aesthetic quality) (*ibid*, 45-46).

Newmark also identifies four strategies that focus on the TL: adaptation (the freest form of translation as it seeks to drastically rewrite the text); a free translation (in which the text is significantly paraphrased as the translation reproduces ‘the content without the form of the original’ (Newmark 1988, 46)); idiomatic (in which the meaning of the original is distorted through the use of idiomatic expressions that are not present in the original and subsequently naturalise the translation); and communicational (which seeks to render the original meaning while making sure the readers easily comprehend the content and language) (*ibid*, 46-47). In light of these definitions, Newmark argues that semantic and communicational methods best combine the aims of accuracy and economy, adding: ‘Semantic translation is used for “expressive” texts, communicative for “informative” and “vocative” texts’ (*ibid*, 47). There are numerous positives in this approach to translation studies, such as the ability to give clear and discrete definitions while also explaining how

they differ from each other and are thus suited for different text types. However, there is also a significant negative because it cannot explain the development of these theories. Translation theories developed not only due to debates they have with one another, but also due to the socio-historical factors and dominant philosophical and theological debates of the time.

The socio-historical factors and the impact of the debate between translation theorists are captured in the approach of translation scholars such as Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (1992) as well as Douglas Robinson (1997). Rather than producing an overview of the key concepts, such as that by Newmark, they provide an anthology of essays and treatises. Schulte and Biguenet defend this approach by arguing that translation theories ‘need to be seen in a historical context. They were not born *ex nihilo*’ (Schulte and Biguenet 1992, 1). The historical aspect of the debates provides a context that can better illuminate the flows and counter-flows of some of the significant developments in the field. In providing this context, Schulte and Biguenet begin their anthology with an essay by Hugo Friedrich, who writes of the mindset of the Ancient Romans as one of a contest between original and translation, as the early translators sought to better the original (Friedrich 1992, 13). Thus, translation became an act of conquest (Nietzsche 1997, 262), in which the text is the site of cultural conflict between Roman culture and all others. This, in turn, influenced the work of St Jerome (Friedrich 1992, 12), most importantly in his translation of the Christian bible, what he termed the Vulgate. This translation became the most important version of the Bible for over a millennium (Robinson 1997, 23). It was in the eighteenth-century that translation theory, influenced by philosophical and cultural shifts at the time, developed a form of respect and responsibility for the foreign language (Schulte and Biguenet 1992, 3). This notion of responsibility is evident in the work of theorists such as Wilhelm von Humboldt (1992) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1992), as will be demonstrated later. Lawrence Venuti (2004) develops the historical approach further, albeit predominantly for research undertaken in the twentieth-century, by categorising the theorists into decades with an introduction for each era.

While the historical approach demonstrates an understanding of the importance of the contextual background behind the theory, it too has weaknesses; most significantly, comparisons between theories are more difficult to achieve for two reasons. First, there is the issue of the size of translation studies, as Robinson notes that compiling only the primary research into translation would be over a million words (1997, xvii). Second, and

more importantly, recent anthologies that cover contemporary theories are not only organised by history, but also by field, with Susan Petrilli's work *Translation Translation* (2003) one such example. The ever increasing size and interdisciplinary nature of translation studies results in the debates in translation studies developing not just over time, but also through very different fields; for instance, David Buchbinder's (2003) essay on translation and the 'gay diaspora' is difficult to position in a historical dialogue or context with work such as Peter Cariani's (2003) on machine translation, yet they appear side by side in the same anthology. Thus, the historical approach is becoming increasingly fractured as the different fields prioritise and debate different concerns from each other. Due to this, it is increasingly difficult to arrange translation theory as changing in sequential time.

For the purpose of this thesis, I limit translation studies in a few key ways. I focus specifically on what is termed 'Western Translation theory' by scholars such as Robinson (1997) and Venuti (2009), as translation theories that fall into this field form part of the context and heritage from which Derrida's work emerged.

The multitude of possible approaches used in organising translation theory reveals the difficulty of understanding translation studies as a coherent approach or set field. It is also crucial to note that my thesis is not about translation studies per se; rather, it uses translation as a site from which to examine Derrida's quasi-transcendental of 'the remains.' As such, there is neither the space nor the need to provide an exhaustive account of the different theories that are encompassed by translation studies. In light of this, this chapter is organised not around translation theory itself, but rather around concepts that I identify as underpinning translation theory in general and those which are also revealed to already be problematic or unstable throughout Derrida's writing. While numerous concepts can be understood as underpinning translation theory, due to the constraints of this thesis I will focus on the three that best serve my discussion of the remains in the following chapters: 'origin,' 'pneumatology' or 'phonocentrism' and the 'presence of meaning.' While I explore different translation theories (which I group into those that focus on art or religious texts, those that focus on equivalence and those that fall back upon what I term a hermeneutic position), this is not to be understood as exploring all the literature on translation. Rather, these serve as examples to demonstrate how these three concepts are at play in translation theory. As such, explaining these three concepts through translation theory will provide a position from which to demonstrate later in this thesis how my

understanding of the remains adds to the reading and development of deconstruction in Western translation theory.

In exploring Derrida's reading and work regarding the instability of the binaries relied upon by phonocentrism and the metaphysics of presence in relation to translation, I am not suggesting that all scholars of Western translation theory are ignorant of deconstruction. In fact, this thesis surveys and draws upon some of the most prominent literature (such as Kathleen Davis (2001) and Edwin Gentzler (2001)) that applies Derrida's method of close reading and thought to Western translation theories. As I demonstrate, this literature highlights the systematic reliance that Western translation theory, in general, has upon the concept of the presence of truth or meaning in the text². Regardless of the aim of the translation, whether it seeks to be a literal translation, a paraphrase or a combination of the two³, I argue that Western translation theory is predicated upon certain assumptions about the nature of language, an understanding that mirrors much of the logocentrism Derrida engages with throughout his work. Referring to prominent translation scholars and theories, I systematically explore the process and manner in which deconstruction reveals that the logic is not inherent to the terms themselves, and in doing so, questions the metaphysical assumptions of Western translation theories. Again, I am not suggesting that an understanding of deconstruction in relation to Western translation theories is a new idea or revelation. Indeed, the similarity of the logic of both translation and Western metaphysics, as well as the breadth of work from a position that is sympathetic to or acting in the legacy of Derrida's work, speaks to the contrary. Rather, while some of Derrida's quasi-transcendentals (difference, trace, supplement and undecidables, for example) have been previously used to reveal the inherent instability in Western translation traditions (Greenstein 1989; de Vries 1992; Niranjana 1992; Florentsen 1994; Koskinen 1994; Davis 2001; Gentzler 2001; Kellogg 2001; Kruger 2004; Roffe 2004; Crepon 2006; Varney 2008; Batchelor 2010; Ertel 2011; Foran 2016, Sun 2018), what I do claim as innovative about

² While this is to be explored and argued throughout the following chapter, this reliance on presence is clear in some of the most fundamental aspects and areas of translation theory; from the understanding of the sacred message in religious translation to the artistic in translations of poetry and the notion of a 'kernel' in machine and translation. For example, Cicero writes in his foundational essay on translation 'The Best Kind of Orator' (1997b) that 'I did not think I ought to count [words] out to the reader like coins, but pay them by weight as it were' (1997b, 15), whereby the meaning is present in the 'weight' Cicero describes.

³ See Robinson (1997) for an account of this debate between word-for-word and paraphrasing throughout translation theory; for example, Jerome and Luther with their views on Bible translation, and Dryden and Denham in regards to translations of poetry, to name but a few.

this thesis is the application of Derrida's notion of the 'remains' to 'translation.' The consequences of using the quasi-transcendental of the 'remains' in theorising and exploring the act of translation includes a way of understanding the impossibility of a 'faithful' translation as allowing for what I term an 'ethical trace.' This use or understanding of 'the remains' is different from the other quasi-transcendentals, as it not only reveals how deconstruction reveals an inherent movement of disruption or shaking in translation theory, it also highlights that this disruption opens up a new way of thinking of translation and ethics.

Turning back to translation, the hierarchical dichotomy of the original compared with the translated copy, and the inherent destabilising force revealed through deconstruction, underlines an important point on the nature of language systems themselves. According to philosopher Jan Lois Kruger, the importance of Derrida's work for translation studies develops from the way he reclaims 'the power of the word and everything it has the potential to signify' (2004, 50). Focusing on the importance of the word itself to language and translation, Kruger suggests that *différance*⁴ challenges and questions the very act of all translation (*ibid*, 50). Kathleen Davis further explains the concept of the power of the word itself, showing that translation is a key area in which the concept of language as a system of differences is revealed (2001, 14). She concludes that translation questions all concepts of essentialist meaning in language, writing that 'the "value" of any item in a lexical set – what it "is" and what it "is not" – only emerges as an effect of its relations in a larger system (*ibid*, 14). That is to say, a words' value or meaning is derived from the realisation of how each word relates to other words in the language system in which that meaning is produced, not from any connection between the word and its meaning itself. While this is true for all signs, not just those used in the act of translation, the effect and mechanics of language systems is revealed in the act of translation, focused as it is on the notion of equivalence. In searching for an equivalent sign, a sign that produces an identical or, at the least, a similar meaning, the very nature of differentiation is brought to the fore.

This understanding of language as difference is only part of the importance of deconstruction and *différance*. In arguing that the meaning is produced through difference,

⁴ I choose to leave *différance* unitalicised, following the way it is translated and written in Gayatri Spivak's translation of *Of Grammatology* (Derrida 1997). *Différance is further explored* in the following chapter.

Derrida outlines his use of the word ‘trace’ and his understanding of context. While these quasi-transcendentals are refined further throughout this thesis, it is important at this stage to reveal how Derrida’s work impacts some of the fundamental concepts of language and translation. Derrida uses the trace to explain the manner in which the signifier gains its meaning from the system it finds itself in, not from any pre-existing relationship with a supposed transcendental signified. This basis of meaning in the act of differentiation has ramifications for language in general, specifically for those that search for truth in meaning, such as some fields of philosophy; it also has key consequences for translation, specifically the notion of equivalence (Koskinen 1994, 448). If the meaning of the sign comes from its relation to other signs, the differing, there is also what Derrida understands as the deferral of meaning in the sign. As a sign’s meaning can only be defined and explained by invoking more signs, Derrida argues that the meaning is forever deferred onto more and more signs and thus opened to the context in which the sign is used. As different language systems will produce different contexts by necessity – that is, by having different signs as part of the system – the meaning of the sign is different in other languages. Jonathan Roffe explains: ‘[f]or translation, this means that we cannot determine the meaning of *a* word because this word and hence its meaning are bound up with the multiplicituous traces of other words from which it cannot fundamentally be detached’ (2004, 105). If one cannot definitively determine the meaning of the sign, then one cannot, by the same token, decide the best equivalent sign in the other language system. Thus, translation cannot be effectively practised as though there was a perfect notion or concept of equivalence, according to deconstruction, for there is never a situation in which complete or absolute equivalency can occur.

As many scholars have noted, deconstruction, specifically in and through its relationship with language, has serious ramifications for how translation is understood and practised. However, this work to solicit and shake the foundations of core concepts such as an idea of perfect or exact equivalency can lead scholars to dismiss or ignore deconstruction as an important or influential means of inquiry into translation. As Kruger argues:

Deconstruction destabilises a number of “safe” conceptions associated with translation theory.... What has to be determined, however, is whether deconstruction actually contributes to the practice of translation. Does its questioning of conventional notions (such as equivalence and faithfulness) not render its insights so devastatingly relativist that the practicing translator

cannot afford to pay it more than a passing and slightly amused glance before returning to the serious task at hand (Kruger 2004, 48).

For Kruger, while deconstruction challenges and ultimately undermines or destabilises core and foundational binaries upon which traditional translation is built, such as the concept of the original text as the ideal version, a form of logocentrism, this can nevertheless cause deconstruction to be marginalised or overlooked. This is due, in part, to the destabilising force of deconstruction, which can be understood as going so far as to render the very act of translation itself as problematic, because it calls into question the very concept of pinning down a correct or stabilised translation. Thus, it seemingly invites the translator to understand the real and unavoidable limits of translation at the very moment that he or she is practising and producing this work.

This challenge to equivalence, and with it a challenge to translation in general, is more nuanced than a claim that stops at the inherent untranslatability in texts. Indeed, as I noted earlier and as I go on to argue throughout this thesis, many theorists have claimed that the play of deconstruction is not a nihilistic movement, rather it seeks to open up the ethical space in removing the understanding of decisions being an either/or (Anderson 2006). Likewise, in defining translation in terms of untranslatability, I am not arguing that it is a pointless endeavour, nor indeed that signs are completely devoid of meaning. Rather, untranslatability presents itself as a decision, insofar as there is not a clear answer or choice in relation to equivalency. Indeed, translation finds itself facing impossible decisions, impossible in the sense that there is no definitive answer that renders all other possibilities void. Because the trace of the sign carries within it all possibilities of meaning of the particular sign, at all times the reader/translator is faced with the need to make decisions in regards to the meaning of the sign. These decisions cannot be a matter of following a formula to find equivalence and follow logical steps; if there is a scientific way of working out the outcome or the decision, it is not deciding at all (Derrida 1988, 116; Reynolds 2002, 450; Caputo 2004, 137; Mansfield 2006, 480; Wortham 2010a, 30; Anderson 2012, 41; Sun 2018, 28).

It is the opening of the sign and text to the possibility of still more meanings to come that leads to the possibility of an ethical encounter (Anderson 2006), specifically between translator and text. This is why undecidability is linked so closely to responsibility for, if a decision were programmable, the person tasked with the decision would be free of the responsibility or consequences that arise as a result. Indeed, any translation theory that

presumes to set a correct method or approach attempts to ignore this undecidability or untranslatability and constitutes a kind of violence against the text itself. To understand this idea of ‘violence,’ I refer again to the epigraph cited at the beginning of this chapter. As Derrida argues, a text is not easily definable as either translatable or untranslatable; rather, it must be both. This moment of untranslatability is a fundamental part of my argument and an important point to make in this introduction: the untranslatability of the text is not a barrier that inhibits translation or renders it void, rather it is a necessary aspect of a text’s survival. Moreover, this survival comes through the role of decision, and, as I claim, it is this decision that ultimately creates the possibility for an ethical encounter between the reader and the text to take place. Thus, untranslatability is both necessary for the text’s survival, and also for an ethical understanding of translation. Central to my argument, I claim that the quasi-transcendental of ‘the remains’ is the trace of that ethical event.

The ability to create new meanings from differing contexts challenges any attempt to delineate an exact or correct translation. However, an entirely untranslatable text is equally problematic, for it would require that all signs remain completely incomprehensible, as any meaning, however misread or limited, is, in effect, a limited translation. As Emmanuelle Ertel explains, for Derrida, the extremes of translatability and untranslatability are equally impractical (2011, 7). As Derrida argues, deconstruction questions the binary of translatable/untranslatable and, in so doing, it, in turn, allows for the texts’ continued survival (2004b). The inability to limit meaning, to limit the sign as saying only this or that, allows the text to survive. Translation, despite its limitations due to the nature of the sign itself, is essential for the continued survival of the text (Bannet 1993, 585).

Much has been written on the survival of the text through translation, along similar lines to that cited above (such as Foran 2016). However, I argue that a substantial portion of this scholarship does not adequately account for and explore Derrida’s use of ‘the remains’ and its importance for translation studies. While many theorists explore Derrida’s description of survivability in translation and language, there is an important relationship between ‘the remains’ and translation that is little explored. This connection can be understood through the commonality in the manner in which he describes the survival of a text and idea of the endlessly mutable sea. The fluidity between translatable and untranslatable, between the survival and death of the text, echoes the movement of the water through the beautiful metaphor he invokes of the sea. As explained above, the

untranslatability of a text refers to the inexhaustibility of the sign, in that there are always other possible contexts and language systems that can redefine the meaning of the sign.

Therefore, this thesis examines the role and importance of ‘the remains’ as a significant part of deconstruction. The survival that Derrida writes of has an ethical component, insofar as the consequences are the dissolution of the text itself. As with Anderson’s argument (2006), the ethical imperative comes from the role of decision and undecidability. However, the history of Western translation theory is one in which translators find themselves having to make choices concerning what to prioritise. The act of decision in translation will be covered in more detail in the following chapter, but for now, it is sufficient to say that the literature of translation scholarship focuses on the difficulty of capturing or dealing with the untranslatable in a text. As we see, this notion of the untranslatable takes many forms, such as the notion of the artistic or poetic, the concept of the religious word and the power that is ascribed to the original word of the sacred text, or the debate between the number of words or structure of the sentence versus the idea or gist of the message. Each of these debates has taken place over the millennia that translation scholarship has existed in the Western tradition. The history of the scholarship on translation is a dialogue between camps, arguing over the decision to make in relation to the choice of meaning when translating; there is never any consensus on these matters in the scholarship or debates.

Thus, the debate in relation to the need for decision, as opposed to mechanical or computer-driven translation, which is still on the fringes in terms of both success and theoretical scholarship, is not one that was introduced by Derrida. The history of translation is thus the history of re-translation as languages adapt and grow, as reading practices and the expectations or demands of the reader and translators change. Nowhere is this more evident than in the long and diverse writing on the best way to engage with and translate sacred texts. While Derrida did not introduce the notion of decision in this sense, deconstruction offers a way of understanding and reconciling this need to the translatable and untranslatable in a text. Much like Derrida’s use of the trace to show how meaning is produced through difference and thus deferred onto other signs in the language system (*différance*), I use the ‘the remains’ to demonstrate how the translation that is produced captures the consequences of the ethical decisions faced by the translator throughout the translation, namely the ethical demands of the singular in relation to the universal. What remains to escape the translation, which is produced through what I term as ‘remainder

effects,’ or the differences between versions or translations of the self-same text, is produced through the demands of hospitality: the text as a foreigner who is welcomed into the language of the reader. However, before I can refine my argument in more detail, it is first necessary to review the relevant literature and outline how my argument is built upon previous scholarship in this field.

The first chapter of this thesis outlines some of the concepts and binaries that underpin Western translation theory, before exploring how these are revealed as already ‘deconstructing themselves’ in Derrida’s readings and engagements. The main concepts relied upon by Western translation theory, with which I will engage, are the notion of an ‘origin,’ ‘phonocentrism,’ and the ‘presence of meaning.’ These three concepts flow into each other, for it is the belief in the existence of an ideal origin that underpins the understanding of speech as the original or purer signifier, thus containing more or being understood as closer to the presence of meaning. These concepts are not unique to translation theory and, thus, any attempt to unpack and explore the tensions inherent within them involves introducing many of Derrida’s quasi-transcendentals, such as *différance* and the supplement. Introducing the concepts in this way serves two important purposes. First, it discusses some of Derrida’s most well-known and influential quasi-transcendentals that are key to his work on and views surrounding translation. These terms do not exist in isolation of each other; rather, they complement one another. As such, understanding these terms will provide a sound starting point from which to examine ‘the remains’ and how it both differs from and is similar to the rest of Derrida’s work. Second, examining how these key concepts of Western translation theory have been read and explored by deconstruction scholars and writers to date illustrates the importance of deconstruction to translation theory.

The first chapter begins with the concept of the origin, in the process, it both defines and applies *différance* and ‘the supplement’ to challenge the assumptions that lie at the heart of this understanding. The notion of the origin as the perfect form appears in translation through the understanding of the original text as the ideal or correct version, against which all translations are judged. Working through Derrida’s reading of Rousseau, specifically his examination of Rousseau’s argument of culture as the supplement to nature, I argue that the translation functions in the same way, as the supplement of that which was not complete. This then leads to the concept of phonocentrism, which places speech as closer to the nature or meaning of the sign than writing, which is seen as a second-

order sign, a sign of a sign. This builds upon the work of the origin, with speech understood as the original sign, with a significant application for religious translation with the understanding of the original word of the Judeo-Christian God. This leads to the presence of meaning, following this belief in the importance of the original word, as debates on religious or poetic texts focus on the existence of either the artistic or religious message in the text. Approaching this argument through Derrida's discussion of economy in meaning and semiotics, I claim that the debate of the presence of meaning ultimately hinges on the debate of quantity versus quality. This is to say, the understanding of a presence of meaning in the text is undermined by a question that is integral to translation. Namely, whether to best capture the meaning of the original in a manner that focuses on the quantity of words, or in an notion of quality, that is, the rhythm of the poem versus the specific words used. This concludes with an examination of the role of decision and the nature of undecidability.

The second chapter introduces Derrida's quasi-transcendental term, 'the remains.' This chapter is arranged into three definitions of the remains provided by Joseph Hillis Miller (2009): the remains as corpse, the remains as corpus, and the remains as cinder. These understandings of the remains all speak to what lives on beyond death and are thus concerned with mourning. The first, remains as corpse, refers to the physical mark that is left after someone has died. These physical remains allow for a kind of survival of sorts, as the person lives on in the memory of those who survive and in the physical remains (tombstones, graves, photographs, etc.). The remainder of these physical remains leads to what Geoffrey Bennington describes as half-mourning (2010, xii), wherein one cannot move beyond the death. Holding them in our memories, the deceased is neither completely present nor absent. In the case of those such as Derrida, this is also true in the remains as corpus. As with the understanding of the corpse, we encounter an author as neither completely present nor absent in their writing. This also relates to Derrida's work on inheritance or 'filiation,' wherein the writing or corpus no longer belongs to the author and is taken up by those that survive. Derrida is still present as we can speak of his ideas, and indeed discuss them at length in theses such as this, yet the act of offering something up as an inheritance implies, by necessity, the absence of the original possessor. While we can speak of his ideas, Derrida's work is never anyone's own. Thus, the first two definitions reveal the importance of this tension between presence and absence in the work of 'the remains'.

It is in the third definition that the importance of ‘the remains’ to translation begins to become clear. Throughout his work, *Cinders* (1991), Derrida reflects on his earlier writing, yet he does so as though different from the author of the earlier work. In this manner, we can see that Derrida offers his own writing up as an inheritance to all, even unto himself. In his reflection on the words on the page, he refers to the cinder as that which remains of the sign. It is this final understanding of ‘the remains’ that is pivotal for the argument of this thesis. The remains of the sign as a cinder encapsulates the first two definitions, in that it is both a physical reminder and also a corpus to be passed on. Yet, more importantly, in referring to the cinder Derrida evokes an understanding of temporality or frailty. The cinder remains of what was burned; we cannot reconstruct what was from what remains. Before turning back to translation theory, in order to see what can be gained from an understanding of translation theory in light of ‘the remains,’ it is important to understand the extent to which ‘the remains’ is not independent or separate from Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals. Indeed, as I will argue, not only is ‘the remains’ a part of deconstruction, Derrida’s deconstruction significantly touches upon and theorises of ‘the remains,’ even when not explicitly named as such.

In exploring this further, the third and fourth chapters engage with several of Derrida’s texts in which he engages with and reads the work of theorists such as Walter Benjamin and J. L. Austin. The aim of the process undertaken throughout these chapters is twofold. First, it allows for a clearer understanding of the relationship between the remains and Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals, so that the similarities and different nuances between them are evident. Second, in light of these similarities and differences, this thesis will then move on to demonstrate how the remains relates to deconstruction in order to ultimately identify how the remains adds to the deconstruction of Western translation theories explored previously. In doing so, these chapters will move through what, for the purpose of this thesis, I conceptualise as ‘movements of the deconstruction’: the initial movement that locates a both/and position in a binary; the movement that locates the marginalised term in the binary; the movement that reveals how this tension between dominant and marginalised is crucial to the creation of a meaning; and finally, the movement that reveals that what was marginalised or excluded is a part of the sign itself and therefore cannot be excluded. The main texts I will use to examine these movements are ‘Différance’ from *Margins of Philosophy* (Derrida 1986b) ‘Living On/Borderlines’ from *Deconstruction and Criticism* (Derrida 2004a), ‘Des Tours de Babel’ in *Psyche*:

Inventions of the Other (Derrida 2007a), *Limited Inc.* (Derrida 1998) and *Glas* (Derrida 1986a). Derrida's discussion of an in-between position, through his quasi-transcendentals that exist in-between two binary terms, is not limited to the above texts. However, it is through these texts that Derrida reveals the inherent tension between what is understood as different kinds of language, or different ways in which language can be understood as operating, a tension I will argue as evident in the binary of presence and absence that is revealed as problematic by the remains. Thus, each of these works are central to the argument of this thesis as they not only demonstrate the movements I ascribe to deconstruction, they also touch upon or illustrate key parts of Derrida's work on language. This both informs my work on 'the remains' and also helps to demonstrate where the remains goes beyond the other quasi-transcendentals in its focus an application.

Through the focus on these specific texts throughout these chapters, I make two arguments: first, that the initial movement of identifying the binary and situating a term or concept at the point where the terms intersect is consistent across Derrida's work on language, indeed across his work in general. In order to better understand the remains, it is necessary first to explore the work of deconstruction more generally, to be able to appreciate and conceive of how the remains adds to and works alongside Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals. Second, the texts I explore are fundamental to an understanding of 'the remains'. While I am interested in exploring the relation between the remains and the other terms associated with deconstruction, there is an element of economy that must be acknowledged due to the limitations of this thesis. The essays and texts I have selected to examine in these chapters were chosen due to their focus not only on language and its use, which is relevant to my own argument in relation to translation and the remains, they also at some stage touch upon the binary of presence and absence. This binary of presence and absence, I argue, is haunted by the remains. While there are texts in which Derrida explicitly refers to the remains, such as *Glas* and *Cinders*, my aim is not to only provide a reading of the texts in which Derrida writes of the remains. As outlined previously, my use of the remains centres on the act of translation as the production of the ethical trace. This argument or realisation has not been made in any work by Derrida, nor indeed any commentary on his work. Thus, it is only through an examination of other quasi-transcendentals used in deconstruction that I can develop and make my argument concerning the remains and its relation to translation.

It is important to emphasise that the idea and work that is termed deconstruction does not exist in isolation, nor do any of the words that Derrida engages with throughout his work. As such, the third and fourth chapter will work through these movements by comparing the remains to quasi-transcendentals such as iterability, *différance* and survival. The third chapter focuses explicitly on Derrida's use of *différance* and iterability. Beginning with *différance*, it is important to note the position of a both/and, in that *différance* means both to differ and defer. In a similar manner, I argue that the remains occupies a position of a both/and between permanence and temporality. Thus, the manner in which *différance* defies any attempt at a simple definition, by existing as a position between definitions, allows for a way of understanding the same nature in the case of the remains. However, it is this dual nature of *différance* that introduces its greatest similarity and point of difference with the remains. The similarity comes through the connection between *différance* and Derrida's use of the 'trace'. The deferral that Derrida outlines occurs through the manner in which signs inevitably defer their meaning onto other signs in the language system. Thus, as the differing between the signs creates the condition of their recognition and individuation, the deferral reveals that the meaning of a word or definition is always constructed of other signs, which are in turn constructed of even more signs. While there are similarities in the use of the trace as a way of understanding the connection between signs and how Derrida writes of the remains as cinder, specifically his description of the cinder after the Holocaust, there is an important difference. The trace that Derrida writes of in relation to *différance* is the trace between signs, whereas the trace of the remains is always between the sign and the self-same sign. The remains as corpse, corpus, and cinder are all relations between the same object in different temporal moments. The body after death, the writing as legacy and the cinder after the fire all reflect upon the relation between an object and its direct past. Thus, examining *différance* in relation to the remains opens up a way of distinguishing why the remains as a trace is important and different to other components of deconstruction.

The third chapter finishes by examining Derrida's use of iterability. Developing upon the work done earlier in relation to *différance*, the chapter concludes by focusing on speech theoretician J. L. Austin's division between performatives and parasitic uses of language. This division of language uses introduces the second movement that carries through the third and fourth chapter, that of marginalisation, because Austin seeks to de-prioritise or move past the language acts he deems to be parasitic. This marginalisation of

one type of language act under another has ramifications for the remains, as translation theories typically rely upon the metaphysics of presence to provide the foundation for translation as a possibility, it is important at this stage to note how the absence that 'the remains' stands in for, as a marker or monument of something that has gone, is marginalised behind the supposed full presence of meaning in the sign. Likewise, Austin marginalises the possibility of a performative 'mis-firing,' focusing rather on the acts in which language performs correctly. As such, Austin ultimately relies upon extra-linguistic conditions; he relies upon rules and a specific understanding of context to judge whether or not the statement or sign has functioned as intended. In exploring this reasoning, Derrida introduces the quasi-transcendental of iterability, meaning repetition with difference. As Austin requires the extra-linguistic conditions in order to judge the success of the performative, he requires that the context in which the sign is used be determinable and intentional, because it is the intended context. Thus, the meaning of the performative is never permanent or fixed in the sign itself; rather, it derives meaning from the context. This role of context is why Derrida argues that the sign is iterable, that is repeated with difference, as the various contexts will result in other possible alternate meanings. Thus, like the remains and the trace, iterability undermines the stability of the binary of presence and absence through the way the meaning of the sign is deferred onto further signs and contexts. However, the remains differs to iterability, in that the remains is not repetition with change, it is repetition and change that comes with loss. It is this loss that comes through the notions of mourning and the cinder that I define as part of the remains.

The fourth chapter extends the ideas developed in the previous chapter, focusing on the work of Walter Benjamin and Maurice Blanchot, in addition to Derrida's writing on them, respectively. Developing upon the movement of marginalisation introduced in the previous chapter, the fourth chapter highlights a similar marginalisation at work in Benjamin's theory of language, specifically his understanding of 'pure language' through his belief in and understanding of a 'pre-Adamic' language. However, where Austin's use of performatives seeks to marginalise other language uses to justify their exclusion, Benjamin's 'pure language' becomes linked to the possibility of translation and the very survival of a text. This point of difference between Austin and Benjamin provides the framework for a shift to the third movement, in which what was previously marginalised is revealed as a necessary part of the binary. For Benjamin, the inadequacy of everyday languages becomes an important step towards bridging languages together through

translation. Moreover, it is this bridging, the potential and necessity for translation, that allows for the survival of a text. Given the definitions introduced in the second chapter (corpse, corpus and cinder), the link between survival and translation becomes quite pertinent. The argument of the survival of the text due to translation and interpretation continues in 'Living On/Borderlines' (2004a). In particular, the similarity between the Derrida's treatment of both Walter Benjamin and Maurice Blanchot reveals a crucial connection between the difficulty of limiting a sign in its interpretation or translation, and the survival of the text and sign itself. Developing the links between iterability and 'the remains' explored in the previous chapter, the fourth chapter concludes by exploring the way Derrida understands a remainder in the act of reading, and how this remainder becomes responsible for the text to survive.

After exploring how 'the remains' operates or assists in an understanding of deconstruction, the fifth chapter returns to translation theory. The definitions of 'the remains' explored in the second chapter draw upon the metaphor of death. The remains as corpse, corpus and cinder all carry within them ideas about mourning and memory. It is this understanding of mourning and memory that allows for the survival of the text through 'the remains,' a survival that has significant implications for translation theory. In exploring this, the fifth chapter turns to the work of Paul Ricoeur, specifically his work on translation, memory and mourning. Ricoeur's work on translation and mourning shares much in common with Derrida's (even though they were antagonists as contemporaries in life), which is why it offers such a strong position from which to apply the Derrida's understanding of 'the remains' to translation. Like Derrida, Ricoeur also begins from a position that understands perfect translation as an impossibility, and it is this impossibility that leads him to conclude that translation is inherently an act of mourning. Rather than mourning something that has passed, for Ricoeur we mourn the inability of the translation to perfectly capture the original or source text. However, while Ricoeur mourns the original, he sees the inability to perfectly capture the original meaning as allowing for what he terms 'linguistic hospitality' (Ricoeur 2006, 10). A perfect translation, for Ricoeur, is a homogenising force that would seek to turn the other into the same. Thus, the inability to perfectly translate reveals the recognition of difference and an ethical growth through the hospitality afforded to the other in translation. Translation becomes the site where the foreign is welcomed into the language of the translator. However, despite this ethical imperative, there is also the loss in translation, as Ricoeur argues that the translator must

mourn for what is lost in translation, what will no longer be carried on, at the same moment that he or she welcomes the diversity of the other.

Ricoeur's argument offers a way of understanding the importance of the remains in relation to and for translation. The understanding of 'the remains' and its connection with the trace now becomes crucial, as in mourning what is lost, the translator must be able to compare the translation with the original. Thus, 'the remains' is the temporal trace between the self-same sign, which, as I claim, comes from the understanding of the remains as cinder. This understanding of the cinder allows the trace to connect or run between the original text and each iteration of it, both in the act of republishing in the same language and in the first and each subsequent act of translation. In turn, this understanding also comes back to iterability, as the translator can only mourn a loss if the meaning of the sign is altered by the new context provided by translation. Yet the key difference between 'the remains' and iterability, which I explore further in chapter three, is also a key or pronounced one; mourning implies a loss that is present in its absence, a loss of 'the remains'. Consequently, the importance of 'the remains' and the survival and legacy is also clear, because translation becomes not a negative act that leads to a diminishing text as meaning is forever lost but, rather, translation is the very act that ensures that a text is able to live on and be remembered.

However, despite these similarities between Ricoeur and Derrida, there is a fundamental difference in the way they understand the ethical obligation of translation and the act of forgetting and forgiving. As I will argue, Ricoeur understands translation as a paradigm in which ethical growth is unavoidable; in encountering and welcoming the other through the encounter with the foreign language and culture, the different translations are produced. However, Derrida understands what could be termed the ethics of translation differently. Exploring his work alongside the more recent Derridean scholarship of philosopher Nicole Anderson, I aim to show that the remains of translation can be seen as an ethical trace in the understanding of the translations produced. Using Derrida's ideas of the tension between the singular and universal in ethics, and Anderson's continuation of this tension, translation becomes the site at which the choice between being ethical to the singular in the text or the universal in the reader is played out. Thus, translation becomes neither a positive nor negative ethical experience, for neither term can appropriately cover the range of decisions a translator must make. Rather, these decisions are etched in the text itself and can be read as a trace, a trace of that which remains of these decisions. However,

it is not the case that the translation produced can be read in such a way that the context and decisions of the translator can be traced completely, as the very nature of ‘the remains’ prohibits this understanding. Rather, through the act of comparing the translation produced alongside the original, we can glimpse that decisions and contexts produced remainder effects in the work. We can use these effects to reproduce the original no more than we can use the ash after a fire to reconstruct the log.

This thesis concludes then by returning to the initial problems raised in the introduction. Namely, what this element of deconstruction, the quasi-transcendental of ‘the remains’, adds to both the act and theory of translation. Returning to the three concepts explored in Chapter 1 (origin, phonocentrism, and presence of meaning) this concluding chapter reflects upon how ‘the remains’ further reveals how these arguments and binaries are already deconstructed from the moment they are created or defined. However, the argument of this thesis is more than an exploration of ‘the remains’. Rather, it is ultimately a question of the way ‘the remains’ adds to or develops how deconstruction is understood or practiced in relation to translation. As such, the conclusion will progress beyond this comparison of ‘the remains’ to other quasi-transcendentals. Using the understanding of ‘the remains’ as a kind of ethical trace, this thesis will ultimately argue that the importance of ‘the remains’ to translation comes not from issues of survival, though they are important, nor of the manner in which ‘the remains’ reveals the fallacy inherent in concepts of correct or faithful translations. In effect, ‘the remains’ offers a way not of viewing or understanding translating, but rather the *translation*. Containing within it the consequences and results of innumerable decisions faced by the translator (such as whether to be faithful to the text or the target language, issues of hospitality in language and the consequences of polysemy), the translation becomes a marker, a remainder of what has passed. However, this marker is not important in itself *per se*, but rather in its relation to the source text and indeed to other translations, either into the same or different languages. Existing as a trace between the text and the self-same text, though in different languages and contexts, translations reveal new ways of understanding both the original text and the context in which it is generated and received.

Chapter 1 – Deconstruction and Western Translation Theory

To speak of translation as a passage seems to require no passage beyond the literal, proper, or strict sense of the word. In Latinate languages at least, the respective nouns and verbs – *translation/translate*, *traduction/traduire*, and so forth – mark a movement that bears or leads across, a transferring or ferrying from shore to shore. This movement is transitive: the ferry carries passengers and gives passage to those free agents called meanings, which cannot or should not be stopped at the borders between natural languages (Kamuf 2010a, 64)

It is a difficulty inherent in its very principle, situated less in the passage from one language to another, from one philosophical language to another, than already, as we shall see, in the tradition between Greek and Greek; a violent difficulty in the transference of a nonphilosopheme into a philosopheme. With this problem of translation we will thus be dealing with nothing less than the problem of the very passage into philosophy (Derrida 2004b, 77)

As both Jacques Derrida and Peggy Kamuf argue, translation takes place from the very moment we have language. While this chapter serves to provide an overview of the literature surrounding translation studies, its main aim is to demonstrate that Western translation theory⁵ is founded upon what Derrida terms ‘logocentrism’, a position Derrida solicits throughout his oeuvre, in particular *Of Grammatology* (1997) and *Dissemination* (2004b). In what follows, the exact form and nature of this position, as well as how translation does and does not conform to logocentrism, will be explored through Derrida’s quasi-transcendentals: *différance*, the trace, the supplement, and undecidability. While my thesis is on the impact that Derrida’s quasi-transcendental of the remains has upon translation theory, it is crucial to first explore the relationship between some of Derrida’s other work and translation. It is in light of this overview of deconstruction and translation that the importance of ‘the remains’ to translation will be made clear.

Both Derrida and Kamuf describe translation as a movement, as the act of moving from one shore to another, from one language to another, which ultimately refers to the movement of either the text to the reader or the reader to the text. This movement becomes

⁵ As noted previously, I use the term Western translation theory in a manner consistent with Robinson (1997) and Venuti (2009, 1-6) to describe translation theory that started with the Ancient Greeks and Romans and developed alongside Western thought and philosophy.

a hallmark of some of the central debates in translation theory, the text moving from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). In describing movement in this way, as the movement of meaning from one language to another, two key issues can be seen. First, as I discuss in the final chapters, there is an ethical demand as the text moves from its original language into the language of another, arriving as a foreigner reliant on the hospitality of the translator. Kamuf's metaphor of the ferry, of the travel from shore to shore, draws upon Derrida's metaphors of the sea and water in reading and translation, which, as I argue later, are important to his understanding of the border of meaning. Second, and more importantly in the context of this chapter, there is the concept of something that can go on the journey, a meaning that can be transported through translation.

However, the first epigraph adds a further lens, that of the act of the creation of meaning, specifically the meaning inherent in a kind of philosophy, as an act of translation as well. The term Derrida is engaging with in the passage, *pharmakon*, is explored throughout this essay, but the act of translation that Derrida describes demonstrates what is at stake in translation and thus, why it is such a focus in Derrida's work. In one of his many essays that deal with the concept and act of translation, Derrida further explores this translation from one language into itself. Introducing the work of Nicolas Abraham, Derrida explains that a word such as pleasure:

...can be translated into itself and without really changing its meaning can pass into another language, the same one, in which the alteration however will be total, either because in phenomenological language and between inverted commas the "same" word functions differently than in the "natural" language but reveals its noetico-noematic sense, or because in psychoanalytic language this suspension itself is suspended and the same word happens to be translated into a code in which it no longer has any sense, in which, by making possible for example what one feels or understands as pleasure (Derrida 1979, 7).

Lacking a language of its own, philosophy works through the altering, redefining or resetting of existing words to draw them forth into a new system or structure. This is why the issues that Derrida and other deconstruction scholars argue as evident in translation are also so important to metaphysics and philosophy in general, as in questioning one, Derrida ultimately questions the other. This is why, in exploring what I deem to be the core assumptions of Western translation theory, this chapter, and indeed this thesis, also draws

upon the parts of Derrida's corpus that focus on philosophy or people who are generally regarded to be philosophers, not translation scholars.

The act of translation as movement of meaning between language systems and signs is a key part of Western translation theory, and it falls back upon what I term the metaphysics of presence. Much has been written by Derrida and other scholars to show how this understanding of a presence of meaning in a sign is problematic and is revealed as unstable through the understanding and use of some of Derrida's most well-known or famous quasi-transcendentals, such as *différance*, the supplement, and undecidability.

This chapter will review not only the scholarship in relation to translation theories, it will also provide the groundwork for understanding the 'remains' by providing an exposition on Derrida's work in order to then systematically explore the ways in which deconstruction as a way of reading works to question and ultimately undermine the metaphysical assumptions of Western translation theories.

Origin

There are numerous theories, conceptualisations and arguments of origin at play in Western theories of translation, not least the relationship between the original and the translation. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines origin as the act of coming into being with reference to a source or cause that exists as a prior or first manifestation (OED 2014). In philosophical and theological discourses, the origin becomes a binary of an ideal beginning before a corruption, as evident in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's claim: 'Everything is good as it leaves the hand of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man' (1979, 37). This conceptualisation of an ideal origin is a key influence in the history of translation studies, especially in religious translation, as evident in the debate between Thomas More (1997) and William Tyndale (1997), as well as that between Gregory Martin (1997) and William Fulke (1997) over how best to respect the word of the Christian Bible. In debating the correct method to faithfully reproduce the original, these translation theories perpetuate the concept of an ideal origin, since they understand the original as the most correct version. As this chapter will elaborate, this understanding of origin is problematic for Derrida and it is challenged and explored throughout his work as well as that of the deconstruction translation theorists listed above.

Lawrence Venuti highlights one key issue with the concerns of the perception of the original as ideal, in his book *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2008). The concern for Venuti is the tendency in Western translation theory to conceive of both the translator and the translation as secondary to the original in terms of status and importance. While his argument reduces translation theory to a single understanding, which Venuti argues as common across translation theories, the majority of translation theories can be understood as perpetuating the binary of original and translation, regardless of whether translation is understood as beneficial or negative, possible or impossible. The original is conceived as complete in itself with the translation developing upon or adding to the work of the original. Yet, for Venuti, the translation is a result of a lack in the original, specifically the lack of being comprehended by those who do not know the language. According to Venuti, this creates a dualism:

On the one hand, translation is defined as a second-order representation: only the foreign can be original, an authentic copy... On the other hand, translation is required to efface its second-order status with the effect of transparency, producing the illusion of authorial presence whereby the translated text can be taken as the original (Venuti 2009, 6).

Despite the hierarchical binary revealed by Venuti, I would argue that the relationship between what he terms the 'foreign' text and its translation is not as simple as one text occupying the position of the authentic original and the other that of a copy. Rather, following Derrida, I understand the relationship between the two as supplementary. The notion of origin is not restricted to the field of translation; indeed, it has philosophical and religious underpinnings as explained previously. As such, exploring the quasi-transcendental of the supplement is aided by an understanding of Derrida's writing on philosophy. In light of this, I will explain Derrida's notion of the supplement through his reading of Rousseau, before developing this understanding by revealing how it works to question the notion of pure origin in translation studies.

Derrida explores the importance of the supplement to deconstruction in his writing on Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Of Grammatology* (1997), focusing in particular on the binary Rousseau identifies between nature and what he conceives of as its opposite, culture. Derrida explains that what is at stake in Rousseau's thought is the notion of purity of the origin, which he argues as evident in Rousseau's idea of a mother's love. Derrida explains that, for Rousseau, a mother's love is 'in no way *supplemented*, that is to say, it does not

have to be supplemented, it suffices and is self-sufficient; but that also means that it is irreplaceable; what one would substitute for it would not equal it, would be only a mediocre makeshift' (Derrida 1997, 145). More than this, Derrida concludes that for Rousseau, whatever it is that supplements nature, that which is termed a mediocre makeshift, does not originate from nature, coming rather from something else (*ibid* 145). Thus, Derrida argues that the supplement, for Rousseau, is evil, an outside addition to a pure origin. However, in Rousseau's account of education in *Emilie* (1979), he attempts to find a position that accounts for both the natural and civilised man, which is to say a position that allows for both nature as origin and culture as that which supplements. Robert Wokler provides a useful explanation of what Rousseau intends in this bringing together of the natural and the civil. He explains that, for Rousseau, natural man lives for himself, while civil man lives for the whole community, so an education that combined both aspects would relieve the tensions or conflicts that are obstacles to human happiness (Wokler 2001, 115). I would argue that this combined education is problematic according to the very logic relied upon by Rousseau, as he requires something outside nature to work with nature itself. Not only is this addition 'mediocre,' as stated earlier, it is also unnatural, according to Rousseau's logic, as nature cannot supplement itself.

This necessity of something outside coming in to supplement touches upon the privileging inherent in the understanding of supplementation. As quoted earlier, Rousseau understands a purity in the origin that is disrupted through supplementation; nature, produced by the 'Author of things,' is disrupted by the hands of man through the supplement of culture or education. According to Nicholas Dent, Rousseau concludes that what is unnatural is 'evil,' an evilness that corrupts the naturally pure man (Dent 2005, 99). Derrida explains the tension within Rousseau's understanding of a pure origin when he writes:

Thus presence, always natural, which for Rousseau more than for others means maternal, *ought to be self-sufficient*.... It is in no way *supplemented*, that is to say it does not have to be supplemented, it suffices and is self-sufficient; but it also means that it is irreplaceable; what one would substitute for it would not equal it, would be only a mediocre makeshift (Derrida 1997, 145).

For Rousseau, the supplement is a necessary evil as it comes in to shore up or fill a lack in nature, as evident in the way he understands culture and education as supplementing the role of nature or the mother (*ibid*, 145-146). This necessary evil is why Rousseau does not

accord the supplement the same value he gives the original. Whether or not nature and culture are envisaged as equal or part of a hierarchical binary is not the issue here, rather what is pivotal is the logic of the supplement that Rousseau relies on when he makes the distinction between them. This logic conceives of the supplement, in Rousseau's case culture or education, as coming into a present or sustained role, that of nature.

The logic of the supplement is also at work in the case of translation. That is, the text is not the original until it is translated. The translation stands in place of the original and attempts to fill the lack in the text, the lack that Venuti conceives of as stemming from the limitations of those who read it or of the language in which it was written (2009, 6), as quoted earlier. This supplementation of the original through translation is fundamental to what I categorise as hermeneutic translation theorists who focus on the growth of a language through the act of translation (see Gadamer 1977; Humboldt 1992; Schleiermacher 1992; W. Benjamin 2009). However, in what follows, I will argue that these theorists fall into the same trap as Rousseau because their understanding of a pure origin ignores the dual nature of the supplement as being both a lack and an overflowing (Naas 2011, 121). This understanding of a pure origin is evident in the focus hermeneutical theorists place on what they term the spirit of language itself. The concept of a spirit of language leads these theorists to conceive of language as existing prior to translation, as something originally present. While these theories on the philosophy of language and translation are diverse, they share a commonality since they conceive of 'perfect' or identical translation as impossible due to an understanding of a spirit that is unique to the language of the original alone.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, for instance, typifies this position of a spirit of language by arguing that every person is a product of the language they use, in that the way a person acts and perceives the world comes from a certain spirit that is unique to the language the person uses to express his or herself (1992, 38). For Schleiermacher, translation is a seemingly foolish exercise, as the translator can only allow the reader to comprehend the author if the translator translates the unique spirit of the language: 'they must comprehend the spirit of the language that was native to the writer' (*ibid*, 39). While Schleiermacher may not suggest that language comes prior to translation, he does argue that there is a unique spirit to language that is impossible to translate and, in this sense, he does support the notion of an 'origin' defined as an essentiality to language that cannot be adequately translated. Faced with the impossibility of complete or faithful translation, Schleiermacher

proposes that the only two options are paraphrasing or imitation (*ibid*, 40). Wilhelm Humboldt goes further than Schleiermacher, arguing that there is not only a spirit of language, per se, but there is also the unique spirit of the word (Humboldt 1992, 55). As with Schleiermacher, this spirit disrupts literal or faithful translations, as Humboldt explains:

It can even be argued that the more a translation strives toward fidelity, the more it ultimately deviates from the original, for in attempting to imitate refined nuances and avoid simple generalities it can, in fact, only provide new and different nuances (Humboldt 1992, 56)

While this disruption to faithful translation seems to be sympathetic to Derrida's questioning around what constitutes a 'relevant' translation, there is a crucial difference between Humboldt and Derrida. When Schleiermacher and Humboldt write that the spirit unique to each language prohibits a complete transference of meaning, they propose that translation is freed from a certain burden of literality. Indeed, based on this understanding, to view the act of translation as merely transference is to diminish the spirit of the original text or language. Instead, both Schleiermacher and Humboldt emphasise the role of 'foreignness' in translation, in particular, the role this has in opening new worlds and thoughts to the reader. As I will demonstrate, this opening of new worlds develops into a position that argues for growth or development of language through translation. It is also not dissimilar to Paul Ricoeur's understanding of hospitality and ethical growth in translation, particularly in relation to the inherent 'otherness' of that which is 'foreign,' which will be contrasted with Derrida's work in the following chapter.

The argument of literal translation as impossible is also what makes translation so important for hermeneutic theories. Both Schleiermacher and Humboldt find this impossibility to be positive as it comes about through either the spirit of the word or language. As such, translation is where this spirit comes into contact with other spirits. Walter Benjamin also finds this impossibility of translation an important part of language, because it is through the attempts to translate that the text lives on and, what he terms, 'pure language' is visible⁶ (2009). For Arthur Schopenhauer, the coming together of these unique

⁶ Benjamin's essay 'The Task of the Translator' (2009) and Derrida's reading of it is explored in greater depth in chapter 4.

spirits, when the reader encounters the ‘foreign,’ is essential for the growth of both the reader and the language itself. For instance, he argues:

when we learn a language, our main problem lies in understanding every concept for which the foreign language has a word, but for which our own language lacks an exact equivalent – as is often the case. Thus, in learning a foreign language one must map out several new spheres of concepts in one’s own mind that did not exist before. Consequently, one does not only learn words but acquires concepts (Schopenhauer 1992, 33).

According to Schopenhauer, as each language is intertwined to the national culture or identity of which it is a part, not all languages will have equivalent words or ways of expressing thought and, as such, they will have different concepts. Languages are as unique as the national identities to which they belong because they share a national spirit. There is thus a commonality between the manner in which Humboldt attributes a power to language through the concept of an individual spirit that each word alone possesses, to that of Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer and Benjamin, as they all predicate their theory upon the existence of a spirit that exists prior to, but is revealed in, the act of translation. That is to say, these theorists presuppose an original language that is identifiable as such. Yet it is only through translation, through the addition of another language, that the spirit is visible and through which both the language and the understanding of the reader grow.

This logic of the supplement and the concept of a pure origin are evident when the logic behind the manner in which hermeneutic theories conceive of translation is examined closely. Specifically, two implications develop as a consequence of the understanding of translation as crucial for the creation and mapping out of new concepts and ideas. First, languages must be seen as discrete systems (that are separate from each other) as only through a second language can the original language expand; as an addition to the original. In other words, language is conceived as a complete system with clear boundaries that can be marked as such when languages come into contact with one another. Second, there is an implied ‘growth’ of language (an implication evident in the work of Benjamin (1999)), which suggests that these new concepts are made ‘present’ in the language (a form of logocentrism) and that there is a teleological development of language. This teleological progression is evident in the passage from Schopenhauer quoted earlier where he speaks of translation as the acquisition of new concepts and ways of thinking (Schopenhauer 1992, 33). Acquiring new concepts presumes that the meaning is present in the text, insofar as the concept expressed in language refers to a signified outside the text and is completely

acquired or grasped through this presence in the text. This understanding requires that the meaning or spirit of the concept is present in the sign; that when someone encounters the sign, the meaning is available as a complete presence. The crucial issue here is that, for these hermeneutic translation theorists, languages is a discrete system that exists *prior* to translation, with growth achieved through supplementation: the addition of one system to another.

Each of these translation theories, which I categorise as hermeneutic, are based upon a similar understanding to that of Rousseau. Like Rousseau, they understand an original and discrete system of language that exists before translation. Thus, the manner in which Derrida engages with Rousseau's understanding of the origin of nature provides a process or path to follow in regards to this hermeneutic understanding of translation. Returning to Rousseau's belief in the sub-standard and inherent evilness of the unnatural, the need to supplement nature with the culture has consequences for Rousseau's understanding of both nature and education, as culture and education must be evil yet necessary. Peter Trifonas identifies a contradiction in this, one that Rousseau is seemingly ignorant of but bound to support: 'the idea of nature as both full and lacking, a completeness requiring supplementarity... if human nature is full, it requires no supplementation, e.g., no education; if human nature is lacking, it requires nothing but supplementation, e.g., nothing but education' (Trifonas 2000, 256). In seeking to combine the natural man with that of culture, Rousseau requires education. However, this education brings with it the very evils that Rousseau wishes to avoid; the unnatural and mediocre culture disrupts the purity of nature. In a similar vein to his discussion of 'pharmakon,' Derrida puts it this way; the 'supplement is here both humanity's good fortune and the origin of its perversion' (Derrida 1997, 147). This dual experience of the supplement, as both good fortune yet also perversion, is why Derrida writes of the 'blindness to the supplement' (*ibid*, 144); that is, by evoking the need for the supplement Rousseau is purposely blind to the very addition he requires. As Derrida explains, 'the blind person cannot see, in its origin, the very thing he produces to supplement his sight. *Blindness to the supplement* is the law' (*ibid*, 149). This blindness to the supplement forces Rousseau to imagine nature as complete in full-presence, yet simultaneously in need of further supplementation. As a result, he is tacitly admitting that nature, as the pure origin, is insufficient in itself, it is incomplete (Trifonas 2000, 257).

Exploring Rousseau's use of the supplement, in particular, his blindness to its necessity, Derrida notes two aspects at work in Rousseau's argument. First, that the

supplement denotes a presence: 'The supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the *fullest measure* of presence' (Derrida 1997, 144). Second, that the supplement does more than add to the presence, because it 'adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of*; if it fills, it fills as if one fills a void. If it represents and makes an image, it is by the anterior default of a presence' (*ibid*, 145). In requiring a supplement, that which is understood as the original must be incomplete. If the original is incomplete and only understood as filled through a subsequent supplementation, then it cannot be understood as a complete or pure origin, at the least not as an origin that could exist as present in and of itself. Derrida argues that Rousseau assumes a primacy or original existence that is perverted by the addition of something that comes after. However, the primary existence is only fulfilled by and through the supplement. It can only be at the very moment it receives the supplement and is thus indentured to that which allows it to be fulfilled. Yet Derrida's notion of the supplement is distinct from Rousseau's. The supplement, according to Derrida, is an inherent lack. For Derrida, the origin is already supplemented. As Simon Morgan Wortham explains, when outlining Derrida's position, the supplement is 'an essential trait that intervenes constitutively at the very origin of that which it supplements' (Wortham 2010, 115). Thus, the supplement shares much in common with the movement of *différance* and the trace (Garver 1977, 669), which is why Derrida refers to the supplement as 'another name for *différance*' (Derrida 1997, 150).

This logic simultaneously diminishes the role of the supplement as a secondary or makeshift solution at the very moment it requires it to fill a void in the concept that was assumed as complete. Thus, what Rousseau considered complete cannot have been. In a manner similar to that of Morgan Wortham, Michael Naas discusses Derrida's understanding of the supplement, describing it as a 'violent opening or breaching' when he writes that: 'What is breached is always some supposedly pure inside by the outside, living speech, for example, by writing, a singular presence by repetition and absence, the putative origin by the supplement' (Naas 2011, 121). Referring to the 'supposedly pure inside' (or origin), Naas reveals how Rousseau's logic of the supplement (the logic that Rousseau falls back upon when he requires education to supplement nature), cannot sustain the idea of a pure origin that exists apart from the supplement. Thus, the logic deconstructs itself (Trifonas 2000, 257). According to Derrida, what was breached was never a pure origin, as a pure origin is 'only dreamed of and always already split' (Derrida 1997, 112). Geoffrey Bennington explains this further when he notes that all metaphysical thought that seeks to

return to a pure origin does so on the assumption that something has gone wrong, either from the outside as an accident or from the inside as a monstrosity (1993, 15-16). These two options can be seen as the same, as the internal monstrosity is the lack in the origin that necessitates the breaching from the outside; the origin was never pure.

When applied to these hermeneutic theories, Derrida's use of the supplement undermines the notion of language as a discrete and self-sufficient system. As previously argued, the hermeneutic position falls victim to the same logic evident in Rousseau. If we take account of Derrida's notion of the supplement as that which is constitutive of the origin, hence there is no pure origin, and if we apply Derrida's critique of Rousseau, then we would have to question the basis on which hermeneutic theorists say that an original language is identifiable and that the spirit is visible. If the spirit is visible, then there is no need to translate it. Following Derrida's logic, what is visible is not some pure origin but simply a prior signifier that lacks a pure original meaning and therefore is constantly translated with just another signifier and so on, through the trace. In conceiving of language as capable of a kind of growth through translation, these theorists rely upon a similar logic to that used by Rousseau, in that they require an outside language in order to supplement the language of the original. It must be noted, however, that the hermeneutic position is not identical to that of Rousseau. Where Rousseau understands the supplement as mediocre and makeshift, the hermeneutic translation theorists make no such judgement. Rather, they see the languages as discrete entities or spirits, which come together equally in translation, thus one is not necessarily better than the other. Despite this difference between Rousseau and Hermeneutic theorists, there is still a commonality between them as they both conceive of an origin, whether it be nature before culture or the spirit of language before translation. Thus, revealing the moments of tension or instability in the hermeneutic position involves challenging both the understanding of language as discrete and manageable systems that exist prior to translation, as well as the theory of meaning or concepts existing prior to, yet also understood as present in, the sign.

In contradistinction to the hermeneutic position, Derrida reveals the fallacy inherent in the notion of language as a discrete system, separate from others, as is conveyed concisely in two quotes from *Monolingualism of the Other* (1998a, 21) where he argues both that 'I only have one language... it is not mine' while adding, 'we never speak only one language' (*ibid* 7). For Derrida, language is tied to political and social institutions, such as law and governments. As such, the words and concepts expressed in language do not

originate with or belong to the speaker; rather, they are part of a system that is always other. Thus, language is never one's own, which is why Herman Rapaport writes that: 'one is, however slightly, a stranger or foreigner to [language]' (Rapaport 2003, 31). This has consequences for the hermeneutic position, because what Derrida is arguing is that this supposed 'discrete system' that then enables for the growth of language (as addition), is impossible because languages are always 'other'. Thus, when Derrida says that 'I only have one language ... it is not mine', he is referring to the unmasterability of language, because language is constituted by *différance*, that is, by otherness (Venuti 2003, 238). Derrida's view of language as structured by *différance* impacts Schopenhauer's (1992, 33) assumption that language is a stable system that can be added to, a system that exists regardless of the act of translation. As Rapaport notes, this hermeneutic understanding comes from a specific view of language, one where 'traditional rules of hermeneutics also presume that texts are monolingual structures with sharply defined edges that differentiate interiority from exteriority, like from unlike, text from nontext' (Rapaport 2003, 28).

However, while deeming them to be discrete systems, they are only understood as being capable of growing and developing with the supplementation of another language through the act of translation. For Derrida, this supplementation takes the form of what he terms to be 'arrivals', in that translation facilitates the addition of words into the native language. Where the hermeneutic position seeks to recover the pure language that was lost, Derrida instead argues that they are rather seeking to 'invent a *first language* that would be, rather, a *prior-to-the-first language*' (Derrida, 1998a, 61 emphasis in original). In arriving into the language through the translation, bringing with them the new terms with which to describe concepts and ideas, the growth of language is not one to a past that was ever present. Rather, as Derrida goes on to explain, it is a promised language to come, 'a target or, rather, a future language' (*ibid*, 62). Thus, bereft of an original language to work towards, what they instead seek is a language that would conquer or override all, that would subsume the words of the other language and culture, and thus can be seen as 'becoming or wanting to become another language of the master' (*ibid*, 62). This is challenged by Derrida both his understanding of decision and the undecidable, and also in his argument that language is structured by *différance*, and, as such, there can never be one true meaning. As Anderson explains, Derrida challenges this with his argument that: 'there is no intrinsic connection between word and thing, because language is based on differences, and that there can be no true, universal, unchanging reality to which a word refers,' rather 'reality

(the world) is constructed in and through the language we use. The “real” world has no value or meaning independent of us’ (Anderson 2008 51), and therefore, all meaning is dependent on context. Thus, the concept of the origin of language and meaning before translation, that which is required by hermeneutic translation scholars, is undone by the supplement and *différance*.

The consequences for this understanding of meaning as produced due to, or in light of, context, disrupt Western translation theory. However, it has ramifications specifically for the hermeneutic position. In theorising of concepts as capable of being coherently or completely translated across, insofar as they are conceived of as parts that can be added to a language, the hermeneutic position understands the sign as a stable entity that can continue to create one specific meaning regardless of the context in which the sign is received. Thus, when Derrida reveals that meaning is dependant on the context in which the sign is used, he disrupts the supposed unity of meaning and sign that these translation theories require. Based on Derrida’s notion of language, I would argue that rather than the hermeneutical understanding of translation, which postulates the coming together of two fixed discrete systems of language, translation should be viewed as more a ‘transformation’ through the play of language (Varney 2008, 117). This understanding of ‘transformation’ or ‘play’ allows for a way of conceiving translation in relation to ethics, as will be discussed further in the final chapter of this thesis.

Hermeneutic theories of translation also rely upon a significant logocentric understanding of origin: the origin of the transcendental signified. While I have briefly mentioned this Western metaphysical concept earlier, its implications for ontology and thus the modern concepts of the ‘subject’ (what Derrida calls the proper name), and phonocentrism requires further explication. As we covered in relation to hermeneutic theories, the transcendental signified is understood as the origin from which the authority of the text or the word manifests. This conceptualisation of origin is epitomised by theories of translation that perpetuate the understanding of a pure origin, such as the hermeneutic position, as well as theories that focus on religious texts. Derrida, in his engagements with the issue of translation in ‘Des Tours de Babel’ (2007a), argues that religious translation theories require the proper name (the pure origin) as a transcendental signified. Exploring the story of the Tower of Babel, Derrida discusses in detail the passage in Genesis where God imposes the division in language that leads to the multiplicity of languages across the world: ‘Over which he proclaims his name Babel, Confusion,/for there, YHWH confounds

the lip of all the earth' (Genesis 11:9-10 cited in Derrida 2007a, 195). The key part of the passage for Derrida is the way God names *himself*⁷ Babel. For translation scholars who focus on religious texts⁸, importance is placed on what they argue is the original word of God, as is evident in the work of theorists such as Walter Benjamin when he writes of the existence of a pure or Adamic language (W. Benjamin 2009, 78). As such, speaking in the 'pure' or 'original' language, the word of God is understood as being free of the play of differences that besets other language. However, as Derrida reveals, this is not the case. In naming himself, God uses a sign that is supposed to refer only to himself, that is to say, it is a transcendental signified as it is free of the play of *différance* commented upon earlier. However, in the act of naming God uses a sign that already exists, that of confusion. As Kathleen Davis notes, this is the point where Babel becomes 'both a proper name (of the city and of God) which does not, as a proper name, belong exclusively to the Shemites' language, and it becomes confused with a common noun meaning "confusion" in their language' (Davis 2001, 10). Thus, for Derrida, not even the signifier of the word 'God' can be seen as referring to a pure, unchanging, or self-identical signified (origin) for it is tied to confusion at the very moment it is used to represent the name of God.

Religious translation scholars understand the notion of the proper name, in this case, the proper name of God, as an originary word, insofar as it is bound to express an originary concept, indeed arguably the concept from which all others originate. While Babel might be tied to confusion, it is not the only sign used to designate God; therefore, one could argue that the possibility of the original transcendental signified still operates. However, following Derrida, Bennington notes that all proper names are also bound by the difference that haunts all language, as a proper name works by designating one specific individual rather than an other; thus the proper name is marked by the trace of the others who are not present (Bennington 1993, 105-106). Derrida's argument from *Monolingualism of the Other*, as cited earlier, reveals that language is not masterable by anyone, even God, as it falls back upon the 'other' of *différance*. Thus, it is not a matter of some proper names being suspect while others manage to function as transcendental signifieds; rather all signs and proper names rely upon and are thus undone by the trace of the other, differing signs. I agree with Davis when she concludes that the story of the Tower of Babel is not about the

⁷ A more thorough examination of Derrida's essay 'Des Tours de Babel' and the importance of the act of God naming himself, including the criticisms of Derrida's reading, is found in chapter 4.

⁸ Such as those listed shortly in the following section in regards to the debate between sense-by-sense and word-by-word

fall of a mythical originary language, rather it demonstrates ‘that language has no pure origin and no transcendental reference point outside itself’ (Davis 2001, 12). The origin demanded by Western translation theory is thus disrupted, as there is no original pure language; rather, all language exists the moment there is translation. This unworking of the concept of the origin is crucial for my understanding and use of the ‘remains’ in the following chapters.

Western translation theory seeks to create an ideal origin that is then used to underpin its conclusions and understandings. This conceptualisation of the origin can be seen in the way these theories privilege the original text against which the translation is judged; privilege and perpetuate the notion of original languages over translation; and consequently perpetuates the belief in the transcendental signified, which in turn is closely tied to, or a result of, what Derrida sees as one of the most pervasive effects of logocentrism: phonocentrism or pneumatology.

Phonocentrism and Pneumatology

It might appear problematic to explore the binary of speech and writing in a thesis that uses the field of translation studies as the site from which to explore the quasi-transcendental of ‘the remains.’ Indeed, the hierarchy of speech over writing may not seem to relate to translation, which generally focuses exclusively on writing. However, the logic that perpetuates this hierarchy, that of phonocentrism, also underscores much of translation theory. Indeed, I understand phonocentrism as inherently linked to the other concepts explored in this chapter, those of origin and the presence of meaning. As I will demonstrate, not only does phonocentrism privilege the origin, it also associates speech with the presence of meaning in the sign, the third and final concept explored in this chapter. Thus, phonocentrism is based upon the same logocentricism of the other two concepts discussed. As such, it not only serves as a bridge between the two, thereby allowing me to further explore how translation theory has been read and deconstructed so far, it also reveals the pervasive influence of logocentrism in Western thought, as the logic that privileges speech is also evident in fields that deal primarily with written texts.

Derrida’s writing on logocentrism is a systematic engagement with what he terms ‘the metaphysics of phonetic writing.’ For Derrida, logocentrism governs both the concept of writing as well as the history of metaphysics and is ‘the most powerful and original

ethnocentrism' (Derrida 1997, 3). Derrida continues, arguing that the history of metaphysics 'always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos: the history of truth, the truth of truth, has always been... the debasement of writing, and its repression outside "full" speech' (*ibid*, 3). The history of Western metaphysics is one in which speech is privileged (in a hierarchical sense) over writing. For hermeneutic and religious translation theories, as discussed in relation to the Tower of Babel, the multiplicity or plurality of meaning is not to be blamed on language in general, rather language as writing is inadequate to accurately convey and contain meaning and truth. In other words, the multiplicity of meaning can be blamed on the existence and reliance on writing. The written sign is:

preceded by a truth, or a meaning already constituted by and within the element of the logos. Even when the thing, there "referent," is not immediately related to the logos of a creator God where it began by being the spoken/thought sense, the signified has at any rate an immediate relationship with the logos in general (finite or infinite), and a mediated one with the signifier, that is to say the exteriority or writing (*ibid*, 14-15).

It is important to note that Derrida reveals a connection between the origin and phonocentrism in this passage. Once more he engages with the relation understood as existing between logos and God. However, what Derrida argues here is that whatever meaning that is understood as present in the originary spoken word is understood to be lost or removed through mediation in the case of the written sign. This secondary nature ascribed to writing (beginning with Plato, through to the theologians of the Middle Ages and finally to the modern age⁹) enables metaphysicians throughout the history of Western culture to allocate speech a 'natural' or 'divine' nature. As Derrida suggests in the quote cited above, for these metaphysicians it is only in speech that truth or meaning is seen as being present (*ibid*, 15).

An example of this privileging of speech is evident in the work of Husserl. While this is explored in more detail in chapters 3 and 4, a brief explanation of Husserl's position will help outline exactly what is at stake in phonocentric thought. Early in *Speech and Phenomena* (1973), Derrida outlines Husserl's argument that seeks to divide language into indicative signs and expressive signs. After dividing language between these two signs,

⁹ For example, Heidegger, Saussure, Austin and Husserl, though this thesis will primarily focus on the latter three for reasons that will be clarified later in this thesis.

Husserl focuses on and privileges the expressive sign, understanding it as the only sign that can be understood as full of, or closer to, meaning (Husserl 2001, 187-189). In his search for a sign that contains a pure or present meaning, Husserl seeks a language that is free of indication, arguing that this is only found in speech, specifically in the form of an interior monologue (*ibid*, 190-191). Derrida concludes that Husserl has ‘reserved for [speech] the power of expression exclusively – and thereby pure logicity’ (Derrida 1973, 18). Logocentrism, in its aim to be closer to pure logicity, is thus concerned with phonocentrism, which is why the metaphysics of presence is phonological (Llewelyn 1986, 52). That is to say, the metaphysics that is concerned with the notion of presence of meaning in the sign privileges the spoken word over the written. The metaphysics of presence is explored in the final section of this chapter; however, it is important to note how phonocentrism moves from the notion of the origin, speech as the origin of meaning or original language system, to the understanding of meaning produced through presence.

Phonocentric thought is prevalent throughout much of the history of Western philosophy and thought, as evident in *Dissemination* (Derrida 2004b). In this text, Derrida focuses on Plato’s phonocentrism, which Plato elaborates in and through the Ancient Egyptian myth of the gifts that Theuth, an Egyptian god, gives to Thamus, the king of Egypt. Of these gifts, the most important is writing, which Theuth claims will be a *pharmakon*¹⁰ or remedy for memory. Thamus, however, argues that writing will have the opposite effect. For Thamus, while it will be a remedy for reminding (Davis 2001, 36), it will not aid memory, as writers will no longer have to remember anything. Writers will become forgetful as they rely on the external source, writing, in order to remember. What they remember will also be divorced from wisdom because a person will be able to recite words back without grasping their meaning (Derrida 2004b, 80-81 104-105). This disruption of memory is why ‘for Plato and Socrates, writing is an evil as soon as something is written down it is divorced from the animating intention that gives it life and guarantees proper meaning’ (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 23). Simon Morgan Wortham elaborates that writing is seen as a dangerous supplement by Thamus, the father of logos, for it is not bound to his speaking presence, thus writing is the absence of Thamus (as ‘self’). Given that Thamus is the father of the logos and thus the presence of truth, writing becomes the absence of truth (Morgan Wortham 2010, 42). Derrida notes that the Ancient Greek word

¹⁰ Plato’s use of *pharmakon* and Derrida’s engagement with it is explored later in this chapter, both in regards to speech and writing and in regards to its use as an undecidable.

pharmakon means both poison and remedy, and the significance of this will be explored in more detail in the next section on the metaphysics of presence and undecidables.

Returning to phonocentrism, if we move now from the early Greeks to the mid-twentieth century, we can also see the inheritance of this privileging of speech in the work of the French semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure reveals two important things about the sign in his work *Course on General Linguistics* (1959): first, that signs are arbitrary, in so far as the link between signifier and signified is not natural but is rather agreed upon through convention and use (Saussure 1959, 66-67) and second, that the sign has meaning only through its difference from other signs; the signifier must be different from other signifiers in order to refer to separate signifieds (*ibid*, 113-115). However, despite theorising that all signs originate through arbitrary difference, Saussure perpetuates the phonocentrism evident in Plato by arguing that writing comes after speech. Moreover, this secondary status further demotes writing to solely being a representation of speech (*ibid*, 23), as opposed to a system of signs in its own rights. Lkening a focus on writing rather than speech to a focus on the photograph rather than the real person, Saussure argues that ‘spoken forms alone constitute the object’ (*ibid*, 24). This leads Saussure to claim that language develops only through or in light of speech, as not only is speaking ‘necessary for the establishment of language’, it is continually the origin of language in the subject as language is acquired through listening (*ibid*, 18-19). Saussure concludes of speech that ‘historically its actuality always comes first’ (*ibid*, 18).

Derrida agrees with Saussure’s description of the sign as based on arbitrary difference. Indeed, Derrida extends this understanding of meaning as created through arbitrary difference and convention into what he terms *différance* and ‘the trace’. *Différance* extends Saussure’s understanding of difference as it contains both the meaning of differ, meaning the difference between the signs, as well as to defer. Derrida uses this second understanding to reveal the way that meaning is deferred onto other signs, those present and absent, as meaning develops through difference it needs the other signs from which it is different in order to be understood as different and therefore unique or individual in a sense. These two quasi-transcendentals will be explored in greater detail in the third chapter when I relate them to the remains. However, despite this initial similarity, there is a fundamental difference between Derrida and Saussure, as Derrida does not follow Saussure in conceiving of speech as originary. Despite acknowledging the role of difference in creating the sign, Derrida notes that Saussure perpetuates a logocentric

understanding of the sign similar to that of the origin, as explained earlier in relation to the proper name, in that there is a sensible pure signified to which the signifier refers. Following this understanding, phonic signs are conceived as being closer or ‘present’ to this truth, for they exist prior to written signs, (Derrida 1997, 10-15; Norris 2002, 28) while writing hides the truth that speech made present as written signs are understood as only referring to the phonic sign (Norris 1987, 67). Derrida notes how Saussure conceives of speech as having a direct relationship to truth, due to Saussure’s understanding that the concept moves straight from sense to sound (Derrida 1997, 35). Similar to the understanding of Plato explored previously, writing is understood as derivative, as coming after the instance of speech.

Saussure’s belief in natural expression is simply a perpetuation of the Ancient Greek notion of *pneuma* with its religious or theological underpinnings. Naas writes that:

While *pneuma* is thus used in Greek philosophy to describe a living breath that is close to speech and voice and that is threatened in its life by writing, Derrida invokes throughout *Of Grammatology* but particularly in his reading of Rousseau and related figures a theological tradition where *pneuma* refers to the animating principle within mankind, a living spirit given to him by God... Accordingly, a pneumatology is always a theology, where a certain concept of the divine *logos* is thought in terms of an eternal present and divine voice (Naas 2011, 30).

There two important ideas at play in this passage. First, there is the animation or giving of life and spirit through the *voice*. Second, the concept or meaning is *present* in the voice; the voice is linked to the notion of divine thought or *logos*. This divine voice is seen in Judeo-Christian thought with the creation of the universe through God’s word, or as Norris explains ‘the power of the *logos* to manifest itself directly in thought-made-deed’ (Norris 1987, 31). In the case of Western translation theory, the notion of the phonological bias develops throughout the history of Biblical translation in the debate between word-for-word or sense-for-sense translations (evident in the debates captured in Robinson’s anthology (1997) as well as throughout Paul’s account of the history of Biblical translation (2003)). The concern that underpins these two contrasting approaches, word-for-word or sense-for-sense, is that there is a correct meaning that is present in or through the text; in the case of religious translation, what is present is a sacred word, which is the word God spoke during creation. As noted at the beginning of the section, while the divide between speech and writing might seem to have no impact upon translation theory, it underpins

some foundational concepts. As such, religious translation theories provide a succinct example to explore the effect of phonocentrism in translation theory, as it is not just the issue of the original meaning in religious translation; there is also the understanding, in theorists such as Walter Benjamin, of the pure meaning of the language spoken by God. Thus, religious translation theories debate over the correct way to not only render the original meaning, but also attempt to keep as much of the original spirit as possible: as writing is understood as a secondary representation of the sign, does it best represent the spoken word through word-for-word or sense-for-sense?

On the one hand, there are those theorists who wish to translate sense-for-sense in order that the Bible is more readable to laypeople and thus more easily understood (Hargreaves, 1993; Aelfric, 1997; Fulke 1997; Hermanson 2001; Meun 1997). While on the other hand are those who see the individual words themselves as the word of God and thus should not be altered (Zimmerli 1967; Forsman 1992; Constantina, 1997; More 1997; Boys 2008). Gregory Martin exemplifies this second approach when he writes:

And this of all other is the most fine and subtle treachery against the scriptures, to deceive the ignorant readers withal, when they give them for God's word, and under the name of God's word, their own words, and not God's, forged and framed, altered and changed (Martin 1997, 121).

The theological understanding of the origin of the text stems from the notion of divine *speech*, the word of God, which frequently appears in the bible through what is termed direct or indirect discourse (Meier 1992, 1-10). Edward Greenstein (1989, 53) notes that the concept of God is used in Western metaphysics to create a stable centre upon which the meaning of the text is built. For Greenstein, deconstruction reveals that the moment physical reality is developed or transcribed into language, everything becomes discourse (*ibid*, 53); a discourse based on arbitrary differences that God began himself when he created the universe, marking the differences between light and darkness and naming them through this difference (*ibid*, 45). Greenstein's argument here is much like that of Saussure's explored earlier; in that Greenstein simultaneously advocates difference at the very moment he perpetuates an origin of meaning through the concept of the spoken word of God.

However, Greenstein does demonstrate one of the most significant ways deconstruction can be understood as impacting upon religious thought, as he demonstrates how signs render reality as discourse; a move that echoes Derrida's argument that 'there is

nothing outside the text' or 'there is no outside text' (Derrida 1997, 158). What Derrida argues here is that there is nothing outside of language; or, to put it another way, there is no transcendental signified to which a sign can unchangeably or permanently refer. With no transcendental signified no sign is free from a reading that reveals the moment of deconstruction. Returning to phonocentrism, this disruption of the transcendental signified is evident in Derrida's challenging of the supposed primacy or naturalness of speech, where he extends Saussure's notion of the difference and arbitrary nature of the sign to be true of all signs, even speech. The arbitrary nature of the sign excludes any possibility of distinguishing between written and spoken signs, as all signs are unmotivated there cannot be a 'natural' versus 'derivative' divide or privileging (Derrida 1997, 44). Derek Attridge explains this when he argues that if writing is the image of speech then the relationship between the two is natural, not arbitrary. The thesis of the arbitrariness of the sign, therefore, disrupts this attempt to naturalise speech and subsume writing (Attridge 2011, 62). However, as previously explained, there is no original language in which meaning can be seen or understood as present. The meaning of any one sign is created by its differences with others.

Derrida continually questions the priority or natural link theorists such as Plato, Saussure and Husserl ascribe to speech, as no sign refers to a transcendental signified (therefore, as mentioned previously, no language can refer to God, who is often equated as a transcendental signified). In other words, deconstruction destabilises the foundation of translation theory that is based upon the primacy of speech. For Derrida, the privileging of speech over writing is thus another manifestation of the logocentrism, which is evident in theories that conceive of the word of God as a transcendental signified. Returning to Derrida's reading of Plato, it is in the notion of the *pharmakon* that Derrida challenges this division of speech and writing and the transcendental signified:

And yet, just as Rousseau and Saussure will do in response to the same necessity, yet without discovering *other* relations between the intimate and the alien, Plato maintains *both* the exteriority of writing *and* its power of maleficent penetration, its ability to affect or infect what lies deepest inside. The *pharmakon* is that dangerous supplement that breaks into the very thing that would have liked to do without it yet lets itself *at once* be breached, roughed up, fulfilled, and replaced, completed by the very trace through which the present increases itself in the act of disappearing (Derrida 2004b, 113).

Of the many issues that this quote raises, what is important for my current argument is Derrida's notion of the 'dangerous supplement.' As mentioned earlier, the importance of this breaching of the supplement is that it enters and contaminates the other term. Plato seeks to divide speech and writing in order to privilege speech, yet Derrida demonstrates that Plato's use of *pharmakon* only serves to disrupt this hierarchy that Plato wishes to maintain. In other words, while Plato is trying to show writing as an evil, violent force that undermines natural nature and the presence of speech, in a manner similar to Rousseau and Saussure, his argument relies upon a sign that resists a definitive reading or interpretation. Whether in speech or in writing, the word *pharmakon* cannot be constrained to one meaning as it always means *both* poison *and* cure. Any reader or translator is faced with a decision over which meaning they will favour.

In a similar manner to that in religious translation, with its belief in the true word of God, Western philosophy seeks to capture or understand the sign as having a true or transcendental meaning. Davis notes that '[p]hilosophy *requires* that ambivalence be stilled, that the sign be reduced to a univocal signified truth, that even within Greek *pharmakon* only has only one translation, and so function as a philosopheme' (Davis 2001, 38, emphasis in original). Echoing the epigraph from the beginning of this chapter, Davis raises several key issues here. First, Davis highlights the link between translation and philosophy. Second, and more importantly, she reveals that the reliance philosophy has on the existence of a transcendental signified requires the ability of translation, per se, to permanently fix or determine the meaning of the sign that stands for the transcendental signified. The ambivalence at the heart of the *pharmakon*, the word Plato uses to dismiss writing, leads Derrida to conclude that the dangers associated with writing are true of all signs, including speech. Philosophy seeks to distinguish between writing and speech in order to preserve meaning as truth. As Niall Lucy (2004) notes, writing is understood as the signifier that stands in the place for the absence of the signified, as opposed to the presence equated with speech by theorists such as Saussure and Plato, as speech is understood as having a natural or original relationship with the concept or object it represents. However, philosophy always falls back upon writing to fulfil its requirements: 'Hence the persistence of the signifier in writing (and as writing) is not exterior to philosophy but is rather always within philosophy itself, dividing philosophy from "itself"' (Lucy 2004, 157-158).

In seeking to subvert the privileging of speech over writing, Derrida employs what he terms ‘arche-writing,’ which reveals language to be a ‘spatio-temporal play’ because it is ‘never fully systematic, objectifiable, conceptualizable, idealizable’ (Morgan Wortham 2010, 114). In *Of Grammatology* Derrida summarises arche-writing as such:

that the alleged derivativeness of writing, however real and massive, was possible only on one condition: that the “original,” “natural,” etc. language had never existed, never been intact and untouched by writing, that it had itself always been a writing. An archewriting whose necessity and new concept I wish to indicate and outline here; and which I continue to call writing only because it essentially communicates with the vulgar concept of writing. The latter could not have imposed itself historically except by the dissimulation of the arche-writing, by the desire for a speech displacing its other and its double and working to reduce its difference (Derrida 1997, 56).

Derrida’s ‘arche-writing’ reveals that the distinction made between speech and writing is flawed, as the problems attributed to writing alone also exist in speech. The relationship between speech and writing is also one involving the supplement. The supplement breaches, to again use Naas’ phrase, that which it supplements, in this case writing breaches speech. As a result of this, the distinctions made by philosophers, as well as the logic that is built upon this division, finds itself suffering from the same blindness Derrida sees as evident in Rousseau’s work. As several theories of translation are built upon an understanding of origin through speech, specifically religious translation with the notion of the origin of the divine voice, Western translation theories are also affected by this blindness.

Moreover, the privileging of speech over writing is a fundamental part not only of the concept of an origin, insofar as speech is understood as originary, but also in the notion of the presence of meaning, insofar as meaning is theorised of as present in speech alone, with writing merely a further representation of this truth. Both Western metaphysics and Western translation theories use the understanding of presence as the foundation for their understanding of meaning. By way of example, Davis highlights that all philosophy relies on the ability to fix a determined meaning to a sign, that there is the ability to ascribe truth or meaning to signs used in philosophical discourse (Davis 2001, 38). This fixed meaning takes the form of the metaphysics of presence, insofar as this metaphysics conceives of a fixed or present meaning that stabilises both the sign and ultimately the text.

Presence of Meaning/The Metaphysics of Presence

Early in *Of Grammatology* (1997), Derrida introduces *différance*, one of his most well-known quasi-transcendentals. As briefly mentioned earlier, Derrida uses *différance* as ‘an economic concept designating the production of differing/deferring’ (Derrida 1997, 23). What is integral for *différance* is not that it refers to differing or deferring, rather that it expresses these meanings at the same time. (Derrida 1986b, 8). Expanding on Saussure’s thesis that the meaning of the sign is produced through difference, Derrida contends that there is also a temporal aspect at play; that this meaning is perpetually deferred through an endless play of signs. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explains in the introduction to her translation of Derrida’s work that:

[t]he structure of “presence” is thus constituted by difference and deferment. But since the “subject” that “perceives” presence is also constituted similarly, *différance* is neither active nor passive. The “-ance” ending is the mark, of that suspended status. Since the difference between “difference” and “*différance*” is inaudible, this “neographism” reminds us of the importance of writing as a structure (Spivak 1997, xliii).

Différance challenges the supposed primacy of speech, as the word itself produces a difference that is inaudible in speech, a difference that only occurs in the graphic sign. It is not possible to conceive of *différance* in terms of finitude or infinitude, as *différance* is never something that reveals a measure of quantity. It is rather, as Ian Maclachlan notes, a continual movement of differing and deferring (2011, 77). This continual deferring is linked with what Derrida terms the ‘trace,’ which is where, as Derrida argues

the relationship with the other is marked, articulates its possibility in the entire field of the entity [étant], which metaphysics has defined as the being-present starting from the occulted movement of the trace. The trace must be thought before the entity... The field of the entity, before being determined as the field of presence, is structured according to diverse possibilities – genetic and structural – of the trace. The presentation of the other as such, that is to say the dissimulation of its ‘as such,’ has always already begun and no structure of the entity escapes it (Derrida 1997, 47).

The trace is not a language or a system for understanding or making sense of signs. It is also not to be thought of as a thing, a device or way of reading. Nor is the trace to be understood as a sign or symbol. Rather, the trace is the very possibility of the sign and all other signs, as will be explored in greater detail in the following chapters.

This is not to suggest that the trace does not exist, or that it is solely the product of the reader. Rather, John Hillis Miller explains that it is always there, not as a result of a particular reading but rather as a necessary possibility for reading at all (2011, 48). He continues:

The trace is the non-presence of the present, which means the trace undoes the metaphysical or logocentric concept of time as made up of a present which is present here and now, a past which was once present and a future which will one day be present... One of the clearest ways, for me at least, to think of what the 'trace' means for Derrida... is to think of it as the space between signs in their 'espacement'. This space is there and not there (Miller 2011, 49-50).

What the trace reveals is that meaning is not present in the sign, as the presence of meaning inside the sign itself would imply that the sign functions as a transcendental signifier. If this were the case, the sign would continue to function regardless of its context. However, Derrida uses the trace to argue that there is a constant deferral of meaning; that is, it is deferred onto other potential contexts in which the sign could be received. However, I am not suggesting that, as a result of the movement of *différance* and the trace, there is no presence of meaning. I agree with Derrida's argument that there is no signified that is 'present' in the text. Instead, there is only the trace of other texts through the repetition or citing of previous signs and the differences between them. Derrida's *différance* reveals that signifiers refer only to other signifiers, never to a transcendental signified, instead it is these differences that enable meaning (signifieds) (Bennington 1993, 75). Meaning is a result of the play of differences as signs endlessly point to the other signs from which they differ (Greenstein 1989, 51; Koskinen 1994, 447; Davis 2001, 13; Anderson 2006, 407; Varney 2008, 117). Nicole Anderson explains this position when she argues that Derrida's choice of words in his work, like all signs, are only determinable through context: 'these quasi-transcendentals are also constituted by a certain context (circumscribed by grammar, semantics, topic, discourse and discursive function, etc.). Thus, deconstruction is determined by each context albeit differently each and every time, and is not simply indeterminate as critics like Habermas have argued' (Anderson 2012, 9). This difference between indeterminate and determinable through context will be explored further in the third chapter. For now, though, it is important to note the way Miller sees the trace as undoing the metaphysical notion of presence, as this questioning of presence is crucial to

my theorising of translation. The differing and deferral between signs is what produces meaning, and this is the heart of what Derrida terms *différance* (Derrida 1997, 23).

Derrida's *différance* reveals that meaning is never a fixed or permanent in the sign; rather there is the potential for a multiplicity of meaning as meaning is produced through differing contexts as the is constantly deferred to other signs through the trace (Bennington 1993, 70-84). Derrida explains the significance of the impossibility of a transcendental signified when he writes:

From the moment that there is meaning there are nothing but signs. *We think only in signs*. Which amounts to ruining the notion of the sign at the very moment when, as in Nietzsche, its exigency is recognized in the absoluteness of its right. One could call *play* the absence of the transcendental signified as limitlessness of play, that is to say as the destruction of onto-theology and the metaphysics of presence (Derrida 1997, p.50).

As Anderson argues, this play (often mistaken for limitless play) is not an endorsement of nihilism on Derrida's part (2006, 408; 2012, 6). On the contrary, Derrida's destabilising of the metaphysics of presence does not lead to an absence of meaning, rather it questions any logic that takes the presence of meaning for granted (Anderson 2012, 12). Davis further explains this shift away from meaning as a permanent presence in the sign, towards a more open understanding of meaning, when she notes meaning comes from the language and the context and institutions that govern the system of language (2001, 31-32). She notes that this creates an almost stable meaning, in that words have a communally understood meaning through convention and past uses, while it also creates a system of untranslatability, as there never is a complete origin from which the institutions can centre the meaning (*ibid*, 42). The absence of a fixed centre does not lead to an absence of meaning; rather, meaning is contextually relative (Levin 2003, 275). This absence, according to Derrida, is why any sign can break away from its original context and the meaning created from it (Derrida 1998, 9-10; Davis 2001, 34). This role of context is why Derrida frequently refers to the trace as the 'instituted trace,' by which Derrida is suggesting that meaning comes from the institutions and context, which surround all signs and readings, both those present as well as absent.

Derrida's theory of the deconstruction of language and the sign through *différance* challenges the metaphysics of presence that is a foundation for many theories of translation.

For instance, theories ranging from sense-for-sense theory to hermeneutic theory, ones that presuppose the presence of the word of God in the religious translation theories examined previously, to ones that focus on poetic or artistic meaning. In revealing this foundation of presence, this chapter will conclude by examining two further areas of translation theory: translating poetry or literature, in addition to translation that focuses on the notion of equivalence, such as machine translation and Eugene Nida's work on dynamic equivalence. While there are many areas in translation theory that rely on presence (indeed I would go so far as to say that most, if not all, Western translation theory is predicated upon this understanding), I have chosen these two as they allow me to introduce and outline two other quasi-transcendentals with which Derrida engages throughout his work. In regards to translation of poetry or literature, there is the question of economy Derrida addresses with regard to the notion of a 'relevant' translation, while the theories that introduce the notion of equivalence are challenged when viewed through Derrida's understanding of decision. I will now turn to translation theories that focus on poetry.

Akin to the religious translation theories explored previously, theories that explore translating poetry are framed by the debate between word-for-word and sense-for-sense. However, in the case of translating poetry, it becomes an argument that questions whether the words chosen by the poet are pivotal for their meaning or their feel, viz-a-viz the flow or rhyme of the poem itself. Regardless of whether theorists conceive of poetic translation as possible or not, they ascribe an aesthetic quality as being present in the work, in a manner similar to that with the hermeneutic translation theories focused on earlier. The division between translation theories that focus on poetry takes on similar dimensions to the one in religious translation, which was occupied with literal versus sense, as both poetic and religious theories focus on which translation style is most relevant. However, the debate surrounding poetic translation is further constrained by the issue of whether translation of poetry is possible, as they understand a certain 'spirit' of the original much like that of the hermeneutic position. This debate leads some theorists to conclude that this spirit of the original disrupts traditional (word-for-word) translation, arguing that translation of poetry as both impossible and incredibly important (Gasset 1992, 108-109; Rossetti 1992, 65). Schopenhauer explains this further, explaining that '[p]oems cannot be translated; they can only be transposed, and that is always awkward' (Schopenhauer 1992, 33).

One of the most well-known theorists to explore the effect of translation on poetry is John Dryden, who describes translation theory into three parts: metaphrase (translating

word-by-word or line-by-line), paraphrase (translation with latitude on the part of the translator), and imitation (in which the translator seeks to write the poem again as if the original author had written in that language). In describing the third way, translation as imitation, Dryden notes that it is not an attempt to translate the words or even the sense of the original poet, but 'to write, as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age, and in our country' (Dryden 1992, 19). Of these three ways of translating, Dryden notes that to translate through metaphrasing, that is, by doing a word for word translation, is the most difficult, as it is 'almost impossible to translate verbally, and well, at the same time' (Dryden 1992, 18). John Denham echoes this when he writes that the most vulgar error a translator can commit is by being a '*Fidus Interpretes*' or a faithful translator (Denham 1997, 156). The importance of this imitation for Dryden, especially in the field of poetry, is evident as he continues: '[a] translator that would write with any force or spirit of an original must never dwell on the words of his author... whereas he who copies word for word loses all the spirit in the tedious transfusion' (Dryden 1992, 31).

Octavio Paz (1992, 1558-159) and Yves Bonnefoy (1992, 188-189) continue this position of free imitation in order to preserve the spirit. They argue that the act of translation allows the spirit of the original to cross into the new text; thus, the act of creation is the force that allows the poem to survive through and in translation. Alexander Pope's views of translation followed this notion of imitation to the extent that his Homer is noted as sounding more like an 18th century Englishman than a poet from Ancient Greece (Robinson 1997, 192). However, Pope defends his translations, writing that 'I know no liberties one ought to take but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original and supporting the poetical style of the translation' (Pope 1997, 193), adding that more readers are fooled by a dull adherence to literality than by a translation that is seen as 'chimerical'. From this, Pope argues a position in which the understanding of a 'spirit' of a text shares a similar foundation to that used by the hermeneutic theorists. However, there are arguments against this theory of translation. For instance, writers such as Vladimir Nabokov (1992, 127) and Paul Valéry (1992, 115-116) place extra importance on a degree of faithfulness to the original as opposed to free imitation. In particular, they note that this imitative approach might destroy aspects of the rhyme, damaging the integrity of the original and the link to the moment of the text's creation. Ezra Pound (1992, 92) concludes the position against imitation, arguing that poetry cannot be translated as poetry, for to do so is to

commit a new act of creation as opposed to translation. Thus, for Pound, the word should be placed above all other considerations of rhyme, meter, and feel.

Despite the differences in the debates around the correct way to translate poetry, the theorists all posit that there is an aesthetic quality in poetry that can be measured (quantitatively: word for word, rhythm for rhythm, etc.) which one can attempt to translate or interpret (but as we will see shortly Derrida argues that this aesthetic difference can never be reduced by translation). However, the question the debate raises (like many of the other debates on translation) is which translation is most relevant. In other words, all translation theories vie for being the most relevant, or the right translation for a particular genre, for example. I want to return to this notion of relevant translation in poetry, but before I do so, I will briefly turn to Derrida's discussion of relevant translation because he provides a meta-position that helps us to understand the notion of relevance in relation to translation, while also raising philosophical questions on what it means to decide on a particular translation over any other.

Derrida argues that 'relevant translation' is 'a principle of economy', which:

signifies two things, *property* and *quantity*: *on the one hand*, what concerns the law of *property* (*oikonomia*, the law – *nomos* – of the *oikos*, of what is proper, appropriate to itself, at home – and translation is always an attempt at appropriation that aims to transport home, in its language, the most appropriate way possible, I the most relevant way possible the most proper meaning of the original text ...) ... and, *on the other hand*, a law of *quantity* – when one speaks of economy, one always speaks of calculable quantity (Derrida 2001, 178-79).

According to Derrida, traditional translation defines quantity as those measurable aspects of a text such as 'lexical units,' 'meter, rhythm, caesura, rhyme', and so forth (*ibid*, 180). Thus, translators traditionally attempt to translate a text so that it is 'quantitatively equivalent to the original' (*ibid*, 179) But Derrida goes further, arguing that this principle of economy requires one 'to say two apparently contradictory things at the same time (1. "Nothing is translatable"; 2. "Everything is translatable")' (*ibid* 179). Why does the principle of economy lead Derrida to this conclusion? Because Derrida argues that a text is both translatable in its property and quantity, but at the same time, not translatable, because '[n]o translation will ever reduce this quantitative or, in a Kantian sense, this aesthetic difference, since it concerns the spatial and temporal forms of sensibility' (*ibid*, 180). In

other words (and this is where my discussion of difference earlier becomes pertinent), aesthetic sensibilities are hard to capture when the connotations of each and every word 'remain innumerable in themselves, perhaps unnameable: more than one word in a word, more than one language in a single language, beyond every possible compatibility of homonyms' (*ibid*, 198-99). The sign is difficult to capture because one signifier points to another signifier, and a fixed meaning is allusive as it is continually deferred and differing. This is also why also for Derrida a text is unmasterable. He argues that a text must be translatable to the extent that a reader can recognise the signs that constitute it, yet it must also be unmasterable; some part of it must resist the translation (Derrida 2004a, 82). This unmasterability comes from the inability of the translator to meet both the demand of quality and quantity.

Coming back to the translation theories which focus on poetry, I would argue that they rely on Derrida's principle of economy; they either follow the economy as property and seek to remove the rhyme in order to preserve a poetic meaning (Vaz, 1992; Bonnefoy 1992; Pope 1997), or they seek to keep a structure and style that is true to the original in the manner of the economy as quantity (Nabokov 1992; Valery 1992). Those that seek to follow the economy as property fall back on a language that speaks of 'transfusing the spirit of the original' (Pope 1997, 193); thus, they lapse back into the same metaphysics of presence that has been discussed so far. The latter translators though, those who follow an economy of quantity, are trapped by a restraint of literality, as Derrida writes:

This quantitative unit of measurement is not in itself quantitative; it is rather qualitative in a certain sense. It is not a question of measuring a homogenous space or the weight of a book, nor even of yielding to an arithmetic of signs and letters; it is not a question of counting the number of signs, signifiers or signifieds, but of counting the *number of words*, of lexical units called words. The unit of measurement is the unit of the word (Derrida 2001, 180).

Derrida continues, noting that it is not a question of word for word translation now as much as it is word *by* word, which 'respects the verbal quantity as a quantity of words' (Derrida 2001, 181). This distinction between word for word and word *by* word refers back to the debate between literal translations and paraphrasing, identified previously. By referring to it in this way, Derrida critically highlights the importance of quantity to this approach, as it is not so much word for word in a sentence or across the whole text, rather it is one word to one word, a word at a time. Whether word *by* word or word for word, translation by quantity encounters its limit in the form of the homophonic or homonymic; translation by

quantity cannot break the unity of the acoustic signifier in a way that transfers all possibilities. This is not only true of poetic translation; rather, it becomes an issue that underscores how deconstruction has been applied to all Western theories of translation that focus on the ideal of equivalence. However, language, and a philosophy of language by extension, is filled and governed by a notion of untranslatability (Batchelor 2010, 40). Translation, therefore, is not the method through which one can fix meaning, but rather it can uncover the movement or play of meaning (Gentzler 2001, 160-161), though not in the nihilistic sense of play argued against by Anderson (2006).

Venuti notes that Derrida begins to question the understanding of a fixed or permanent meaning through the use of the word ‘relevant’ in the title of his paper, opening up the polysemy at the heart of language; an openness that allows for and necessitates this double bind of (un)translatability. In Derrida’s paper, ‘What is Relevant Translation?’ Venuti points out that ‘Relevant’ might be French and, therefore, translatable into English, however, it might be English that is undergoing a transformation into French and, therefore, resistant to translation (Venuti 2003, 240). ‘Relevant’ acts as a homonym, which is impossible to translate word-for-word, as this literal approach perpetuates the understanding of ‘the indivisible unity of an acoustic form that incorporates or signifies the indivisible unity of a meaning or concept’ (Derrida 2001, 181). Derrida’s deconstruction of the traditional forms of translation also has ethical implications for the role of translation and of the translator, as will be explored in the final chapter. In the meantime, this is a good point in which to discuss the relevance of translation in relation to what it means to ethically decide on which translation to use, especially given his argument that meaning is allusive as it is continually deferred and differing (but this is not to say as argued earlier that there is no meaning). If there is no one fixed permanent meaning in a text, then this requires an ethical decision on how to translate. However, as we will now see, this decision is for Derrida is a result of undecidability that permeates all signs, all language.

One of the most well-known examples of undecidability with which Derrida engages is the *pharmakon*. *Pharmakon*, as argued earlier, is used by Derrida to disrupt the understanding of the origin of writing as speech. In translating Plato’s work, the translator is faced with a decision over the possible ways to translate, as *pharmakon* defies any attempt to reduce it to a single meaning. Thus, it challenges the translator at every point of the work, as they are forced to attempt to limit the meaning to a single term. In this manner, *pharmakon* is essentially an undecidable term, as the sign itself does not contain the answer

as to which word it should be rendered as in the translation. This necessity for an act of a decision, a true decision in the sense that there is no definitive answer that renders all other possibilities void, is why Davis argues that *pharmakon* is untranslatable (2001, 38).

This is an opportune moment to outline exactly what is at stake in the use of the term ‘untranslatable.’ There is a risk in using this term, as outlined earlier in this chapter, that translation scholars and translators themselves will disregard or pay no attention to the notion of deconstruction in translation if it is understood as falling back on terms that deny the existence or purpose of their craft. As I will go on to demonstrate, this is not the case, as a true decision can only come out of the existence of something being understood of as inherently ‘undecidable.’ Thus, true translation can only come from moments of untranslatability. This importance of untranslatability to translation is not unique to my work, as it is an argument that runs throughout many of the theorists that have explored translation in recent time. For example, Barbara Cassin, in her work *The Dictionary of Untranslatables* (2014, xvii) defines the notion of an untranslatable not as a sign of failure, as in that one cannot translate. Instead, it is this notion of untranslatability that pulls the translator back to further translate, to seek to capture what was left behind before. This is a central theme of my work, as will be outlined throughout this thesis. Returning to Cassin, in focusing on specific philosophical concepts that are products of a certain thought and culture, Cassin explains that signs cannot be simply ‘superimposed,’ where a philosophical concept can be replaced by another word in the new language without impact. Rather, she argues:

Does one understand the same thing by “mind” as by *Geist* or *esprit*, is *Pravda* “justice” or “truth,” and what happens when we render *mimesis* as “representation” rather than “imitation”? Each entry thus starts from a nexus of untranslatability and proceeds to a comparison of terminological networks, whose distortion creates the history and geography of languages and cultures (*ibid*, xvii).

For Cassin, the concept is tied into the original sign not out of a proximity of meaning, but out of the choice the translator faces when encountering the sign. This choice presents as a ‘distortion’ for Cassin, though I go on to conceive of this as an act that produces a remainder through the violence of the translation. To explore this further, I will now briefly outline the way Derrida engages with the *pharmakon* and the layers of potential meaning and choice he sees at work in the sign. While undecidability is ultimately true of all signs, as there is always the possibility of new contexts further altering and augmenting the potential

meaning of any and all signs, I use the term *pharmakon* throughout this thesis in order to further draw out the implications my argument has for translation, and to better ground and explore the argument.

Derrida identifies and outlines the plurality of the word *pharmakon* from the outset of his work, noting that it can, ‘without mistranslation,’ be rendered or understood as ‘remedy, recipe, poison, drug, philtre etc.’ (Derrida 2004b, 77). Moreover, Derrida explores how it links on to other chains of signifiers, such as *Pharmacia*, a fountain with healing powers or the act of dispensing the *pharmakon* (*ibid*, 75), and *pharmakeus*, meaning magus or sorcerer, one who casts spells or charms, as well as *pharmakoi* or *pharmakos*, meaning scapegoat. Indeed, it is these last two that Derrida focuses on in the second part of his reading of Plato, as he draws upon the notion of a bewitching charm that confuses the senses and the scapegoat as that which is excised for the good of the city (2004b, 119-120, 134).

This plurality and multiplicity of meaning reveals both a passage of translation and also begins to outline what I go on to reveal as a violence of translation. Indeed, as Derrida notes in a passage prior to that used in the epigraph that opened this chapter:

It will also be seen to what extent the malleable unity of this concept, or rather its rules and the strange logic that links it with its signifier, has been dispersed, masked, obliterated, and rendered almost unreadable not only by the imprudence or empiricism of the translators, but first and foremost by the redoubtable, irreducible difficulty of translation. (*ibid*, 77)

The chain of signifiers that are linked to the term *pharmakon* produce more than an opposition of terms, a binary of poison and cure. Moreover, the binary itself cannot be considered simple in any terms, as the meanings draws upon develop away from speech and writing into the very attempt by Plato to excise the meaning of a sign from writing itself, to preserve it to the spoken sign alone, and thus to scapegoat writing in order to preserve the meaning of the spoken word. Derrida’s argument here is not to lift writing or defend it against the claims made by Plato. Rather, Derrida’s reading of Plato aims to show that the challenge Plato poses to writing is true for all signs. This is the importance of Plato’s attempt to exile the scapegoat, to lay all the evils of interpretation at the feet of the written sign and, thus, to propose a purity in speech through the dissociation to writing. But, as Derrida notes in the quote above, this attempt to excise comes from a word that challenges reading or attempts to define a particular meaning. For Derrida, Plato’s text

centres on this choice of sign, and in his reading, Derrida shows that the stability that Plato argues as inherent in the written sign is true of all signs.

The decision at the heart of *pharmakon* reveals the difficulty of translation. It is not to say the complete impossibility, though it will be termed throughout this thesis as a kind of untranslatability, insofar as it renders the act of a perfect or ideal translation as unachievable or questionable. How could one speak of a perfect or ideal translation for this sign? This undecidability at the heart of *pharmakon* will be explored more throughout this thesis.

However, as noted above, for Derrida, the undecidable is not just in key concepts such as *pharmakon*. Rather, it can be seen as true of all signs. Because the trace of the sign carries within it all possibilities of meaning of the particular sign, at all times the reader/translator is faced with the need to make decisions in regards to the meaning of the sign. These decisions cannot be a matter of following a formula or using a device to find equivalence and follow logical steps, if there is a scientific way of working out the outcome or the decision, it is not deciding at all (Derrida 1988, 116; Reynolds 2002, 450; Caputo 2004, 137; Mansfield 2006, 480; Wortham 2010a, 30; Anderson 2012, 41; Sun 2018, 28). All decisions come from the undecidable nature of the trace, from the ever-changing relationship between signifier and signified; this undecidable nature of the sign is what forces us to make decisions.

This is not to say that all translations and readings are void of meaning because they are based on undecidable decisions but rather the opposite, as John D. Caputo explains:

Undecidability is taken, or mistaken, to mean a pathetic state of apathy, the inability to act, paralyzed by the play of signifiers that dance before our eyes, like a deer caught in a headlight. But rather than an inability to act, undecidability is the condition of possibility of acting and deciding. For whenever a decision is really a decision, whenever it is more than a programmable, deducible, calculable, computable result of a logarithm, that is because it has passed through “the ordeal of undecidability”. One way to keep this straight is to see that the opposite of “undecidability” is not “decisiveness” but programmability, calculability, computerisability, or formalisability. Decision-making, judgment, on the other hand, positively *depends upon* undecidability, which gives us something to decide (Caputo 2004, 137).

The important sentence to consider is when Caputo describes the opposite of undecidability, not as decisiveness, which would be to assume undecidability is the inability to act, but as programmability. Thus, the opposite of undecidability is not indecision; rather, it is a lack of choice because everything is programmed in advance. This is why undecidability is linked so closely to responsibility for, if a decision were programmable, the person tasked with the decision would be free of the responsibility or consequences that arise as a result. The outcome of the decision would be a forgone conclusion, regardless. Contrary to this, both Caputo (2004, 137) and Derrida (1988, 116) suggest that it is only through undecidability that there can be a true decision, with the responsibility and consequences that entails. The concept of the undecidable deconstructs the understanding Western translation theories have of the possibility of there being one true or correct translation. This reveals that the economy of translation (which is inevitable) is, in fact, a result of the decision for which we need to take responsibility both as translators and readers of the translation. As responsibility or decision rests on an undecidable aspect at play in the sign, there is no right or wrong approach to the demands of economy expressed earlier. Each demand is individual depending on the text, the translator, and the context of the translation, so any translation theory that presumes to set a correct method or approach attempts to ignore this undecidability and to constitute a violence.

This violence develops in light of the phonocentrism explored previously. Philosophy conceives of speech as the original form of language, as that which comes first with writing developing after; thus, speech is understood as having the closest proximity to truth (Husserl 2001, 189; Smith 2005, 16-17). This understanding creates an inside/outside binary where truth is seen as interior and writing exterior to this truth, representing the absence of the original truth instead. As writing is perceived to be exterior, there is an assumed act of violence as writing is seen as annihilating the concept it represents. However, James Smith notes the violence involved in the process of learning or acquiring knowledge is not the violence of writing itself, rather it is the violence of ethnocentrism, violence of the same against that which is other:

in order for something (or someone) to be known, the phenomenon must resubmit itself and conform to the conditions of the knowing subject. As a result, what is known – the ‘other’ – must lose its alterity and divest itself of otherness in order to ‘appear’ within the sphere of the Same... By privileging presence, and that which can be made present, the ontological

tradition has also privileged the Same, and thereby marginalised that which is other, absent, and cannot ‘appear’ (Smith 2005, 31)

The violence attributed to writing alone is true of all forms of inscription, even speech. The violence does not come from the removal of the presence of the object in the act of writing; rather, it is the very privileging of presence that leads to the violence against the other. This violence is why Derrida refers to the metaphysics of presence as the most powerful form of ethnocentrism; it seeks to privilege presence in the form of the same and excludes the absence or the alterity of the other. Deconstructing the metaphysics of presence involves an ethical turn towards the other; a turn that is developed through theorists such as Niranjana (1992) and Gentzler (2001). This is not to say that all translations are equally correct or incorrect, as this would be to fall victim to the claims of nihilism expressed by Rorty and Searle; there are translations that are more or less correct than others, but there is no one *definitive* translation. This will be explored further in the final chapter of this thesis when I address Derridean ethics and translation.

Returning to decision and responsibility in translation, the metaphysics of presence underpins theories that focus on ideal meanings in the text, that is, ideal in the form of theological positions or aesthetic considerations. This metaphysics is also at play in theories that consider notions of equivalence and kernels, notably the work of Eugene Nida, as well as the field of machine or computer translation (Hutchins 1995). While Nida’s equivalence is distinct from translation theories that focus on the role of computers, both Nida (Munday 2008, 39-40) and the theory of machine translation that Hutchins terms ‘interlingua’¹¹ use the distinction between surface and deep structures in language (Hutchins 1995, 432). Nida is known for his theory of translation that focuses on a method he terms ‘dynamic equivalence’ (2009, 156). In ‘Principles of translation as exemplified by Bible translating’, Nida notes that the best tradition of Bible translation scholarship is one that: ‘Translating consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and secondly in style’ (Nida 1975, 33). The key phrase in this quote is ‘closest natural equivalent’, where the word ‘natural’ indicates that only equivalent words in the language to which the text is being translated are used, rather than foreign words, which do not have an equivalent meaning in either form or feeling.

¹¹ Interlingua refers to a constructed language or system of abstract signs that are conceived as common across languages. The SL is translated into this language before being translated into the TL and it is understood as advantageous when the text is to be translated into multiple languages (Hutchins 1995, 432). Interlingua is discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter.

Dynamic equivalence emphasises the creation of an ‘equivalent effect’, in which the aim of the translator is not to reproduce the message. Rather, the translation works to reproduce the relationship between receptor and message in the translation identically to that which existed in the original language and context (Munday 2008, 42; Nida 2009, 156). Dynamic equivalence focuses on naturalising the message so that the intelligibility of the message becomes the value of the translation, allowing for the reader to have little to no knowledge of the source context and culture. Nida explains that: ‘Such intelligibility is not, however, to be measured merely in terms of whether the words are understandable and the sentences grammatically constructed, but in the terms of the total impact the message has on the one who receives it’ (Nida 2003, 22).

It is not the words or phrasing that is important in the translation, according to Nida, rather it is the effect of the message itself (Gentzler 2001, 54). Although Nida points to the similarities most languages have in terms of object classes and event classes (nouns and verbs), he acknowledges that there are still many differences in the grammar or the type of language used to describe things that make literal passages difficult to translate (Nida 1975). For Nida, language is constructed by ‘kernels’ which allow for the translator to strip back the core message before transferring it across to the new language and finally restructuring it so it creates the same effect on the new readers as it did on the old (Gentzler 2001, 47). While he acknowledges that there are differences between languages, Nida understands these shared foundational kernels, which he argues constitute all language, as the key to translation (Gentzler 2001, 55; Munday 2008, 41). From this, he develops a theory that not only argues for the possibility of translation but also, and more importantly, for the effect of the original to be translated (Nida 1975, 53). Nida explains:

instead of going directly from one set of surface structures to another, the competent translator actually goes through a seemingly roundabout process of analysis, transfer and restructuring. That is to say, the translator first analyses the message of the SOURCE language into its simplest and structurally clearest forms, transfers it at this level, and then restructures it to the level in the RECEPTOR language which is most appropriate for the audience which he intends to reach (Nida 1975, 79-80).

Nida explains this theory of translation through a metaphor of a hiker who encounters a stream that he/she cannot cross, so the hiker walks downstream in order to find a shallow part to cross before walking back upstream to re-join the trail (*ibid*, 80). What Nida is explaining through this metaphor is that translation is the process of reducing the message

to the key points, thereby shortening the message and making it easier to translate into key points in the new language. From this shortened translation, the translator can look to shift or flesh out the short translation in order to get it to a stage in the target language where it creates a similar effect to that created by the source text. These key points, Nida refers to as ‘kernels’, theorising that all language and texts are made up of these on a fundamental level.

The notion of universal properties that underlie all languages is problematic, as it relies on an understanding of the presence of meaning and the subject/translator as fixed across contexts. Even though Nida does not privilege the sign as other structuralists do, focusing instead on the effect of the sign (Gentzler 2001, 52), he still relies on the presence of this effect as something capable of being transferred, as well as the presence of these deeper structures or kernels. Gentzler argues, however, that deconstruction removes the possibility of a deep meaning or a ‘kernel’ in the text (2001, 147), and instead of seeking to fix meaning, translation then becomes the site of the play in language (160-161). However, I argue that Gentzler places too much weight on the concept of free play in language. Instead of being the site of play, I instead propose that translation is the site of a decision, a decision that momentarily determines meaning through the individual context the translation finds itself acting in. As I highlighted earlier, the quasi-transcendental nature of Derrida’s choice of word or term in his work is such that they are determinable in a context, even if that the context itself is indeterminate; no one can ever tie-down or saturate the context (Colebrook and McHoul 1996, 437; Anderson 2012, 9). In what follows, I will develop what the consequences of this tension of determinable and indeterminacy in context has for translation through what Derrida terms ‘remainder effects’ (2005, 152). This will set the foundations for my theory of language as ‘remains’ in the following chapters. Despite my point of difference, Gentzler’s work offers a strong comparison between Nida’s dynamic equivalence and deconstruction, as well as some of the issues deconstruction raises for Nida’s thought.

Gentzler is not the only theorist to apply Derrida’s theories to question Nida’s understanding of kernels. Andrew Benjamin explains that any theory that perceives of recovery and exchange in translation is naïve, as it presumes a subject and other that are already constituted and can be known as such, thus ignoring the possibility that the other can remain elusive and unrecoverable or resistant to exchange (1988, 242-243). Jan-Louis Kruger’s presents a similar position, writing that it is impossible to conceive of substituting

a signifier while keeping the signified intact, disrupting the notion of a complete unchangeable kernel (Kruger 2004, 57). Kruger (2004, 54) is quick to note, however, that deconstruction is not a theory of nihilism as deconstruction does not deny that the notion of 'truth' is important. Rather, deconstruction proposes that this truth cannot be perceived as original or pure as it cannot escape the play of the language and the effect of the trace (Kruger 2004, 54; Crepon 2006, 306-307). As I will demonstrate shortly, this distinction between truth and a pure origin is analogous to the distinction made earlier between determinate and indeterminable. While Kruger agrees that meaning is determined by context, he argues that the context in which the sign is received is ultimately indeterminate. To undermine and reveal how the concept of the kernel is problematic is to call into question the theory of transcendental meaning or truth that exists outside of both text and context. As Peter Florensten puts it, *différance* and the trace remove the meaning from the transcendental signified implied in the source text itself, that is, there cannot be a meaning or kernel that the source text refers to absolutely (2010, 241).

However, Derrida's quasi-transcendentals do not remove the possibility of meaning; rather, they remove the possibility of transcendental meaning because, as Derrida explains, 'the intention animating the utterance will never be through and through present to itself and to its content.... Above all, this essential absence of intending the actuality of utterance, this structural unconsciousness, if you like, prohibits any saturation of the context' (Derrida 1988, 18). According to Derrida, while the author's intention gives meaning to the sign in a particular context, it does not do so at the expense of all other possible meanings; even the author or animating intention cannot completely saturate the context and instill a pure 'truth' in the text. This is one of the key differences between Derrida and theorists such as J. L. Austin, who argues that context is determinate in that it exists prior to the speech act. When Derrida writes, 'I shall try to demonstrate why a context is never absolutely determinable, or rather, why its determination can never be entirely certain or saturated' (1988, 2-3), he is not claiming that context is undeterminable. Rather, in describing the contexts 'determination', Derrida argues that it is the very act of determining context that precludes it from being determinable. That is to say, that one can, and indeed must, determine the context is a result of the context not being determinable in itself. Colebrook and McHoul explain that Derrida does not advocate indeterminacy, he is instead advocating that the determining factors of the context and meaning be taken into account (1996, 434). Thus, undecidability results not from a lack of determination in the

context, but rather from ‘the strictest possible determination of the figures of play, of oscillation, of undecidability, which is to say, of the *differential* conditions of determinable history’ (Derrida 1988, 145). That a context can be determined is not questioned by Derrida; rather, he questions that this context is always determinable as the same. That is to say, he challenges the notion that the context exists in a way that the sign can and will always be interpreted as meaning one thing, which would allow for a transcendental meaning. Thus, undecidability is not indeterminacy in the sense of a fluid or unstable meaning. As stated previously, Derrida argues that there is nothing outside but the text, rather it is indeterminacy in that the context cannot be saturated or transcend its reading.

In *Limited Inc.* (1988), Derrida highlights the role context and citations play in the creation of meaning. As argued above, his understanding of context disrupts the concept of a kernel or underlying structure, as meaning is no longer stabilised by the sign itself, rather any temporary stability or determination comes from the context in which the sign is received (Davis 2001, 32). This leads Emmanuelle Ertel to posit that both translatability and untranslatability are impossible; *différance* and the trace create neither a presence to be translated nor an absence that escapes it (2011, 7). Consequently, translators produce partial meanings and, as such, previous understandings of the original and its translation are no longer valid (Koskinen 1994, 447). While I agree with Kaisa Koskinen in relation to the need to develop new ways of thinking of translation, I propose that the impossibility of both translatability and untranslatability comes from the demands of both determinacy and indeterminacy in context as opposed to the partial meaning of which Koskinen theorises. The decisions required in reading or translating produce an effect or a moment that should not be thought of in terms of partial compared to complete, as this can be misunderstood as perpetuating the nihilist argument that is levelled at Derrida by theorists such as Searle (1993). While I argue throughout this thesis that translation always leaves something behind, that which I characterise as the ‘remains,’ this does not make the translation incomplete or partial, as that would imply the existence of a presence of meaning that could be reproduced partially or imperfectly. Instead, as I will reveal throughout this thesis, translations are produced through, and as a consequence of, remainder effects. As I will elaborate in later chapters, translations are the consequence of decisions made in the face of the undecidable sign.

In what follows, I will turn to ‘machine translation,’ in order to further elaborate upon Derrida’s use of the term undecidability. Similar to the work of Nida, machine

translation is primarily concerned with the notion of equivalence as the key to a successful translation. However, it must be noted that there is no belief in an ideal or complete equivalence, with academics such as Hutchins arguing that this is beyond even human translators (1995, 431). Hutchins notes three distinct methods of translating throughout the history of machine translation. First, direct translation, in which the programming is developed for the use of one particular language to another with a simplification of dictionaries to reduce the effects of homonyms allowing a simpler approach that keeps many of the original features in terms of word order and grammar. This approach is most effective with clearly defined and controlled languages and context-specific texts such as manuals. Secondly, there is the 'interlingua' model, wherein a new language is created by abstract or language-neutral representations. The translation then consists of source language (SL) to interlingua, and then interlingua to target language (TL). This use of the interlingua opens the possibility of multiple or flexible translations as once the language to interlingua relation is established, the text can then be translated into any other target language. Finally, there is the approach in which the message is turned into abstract representations and then transferred to the target language in three parts, analysis, transfer, and generation of the new text (Hutchins 2010, 3). Of these three methods, the interlingua process in translation is the most difficult in which to sustain results, yet it is the most pertinent to focus on here because of the way it theorises and conceptualises language. Mel'čuk notes that the interlingua process tends to conceive of the interlingua as complete or real, 'with a generative grammar to define its formulae so that there would be some notion of well-formed expressions in the interlingua' (Mel'čuk 2000, 214). Mel'čuk argues that this understanding of the interlingua can get in the way of a successful translation as it requires much more work to establish a perfect word-for-word translation with the assumption that the interlingua language is 'real.' This would mean that 'all words would have to be broken down into interlingual atoms of meaning smaller than required in any particular language' (Mel'čuk 2000, 213). Dispelling this traditional method of the interlingua, Mel'čuk proposes, in its place, that an interlingua language functions not as a real language but merely as a system of representation that does not seek to express the sentence as a sentence but rather as 'bundles of correspondence' or 'deep structures' (Mel'čuk 2000, 213). He explains:

There is no mechanism in the interlingua for converting information from one language into information for another language. The interlingua is not a language like a natural language, it is simply a formalism for representing,

in a clear and elegant way, the information that can be extracted from the text (Mel'čuk 2000, 214).

This approach influenced Bernard Vauquois, who developed the idea of a 'hybrid pivot' (Boitet 2000, 335), in which the grammatical and relational features of the message are universal, universal in an interlingua sense, while the lexical units themselves are from a natural language and are translated by means of a bilingual dictionary 'which enables the determination of the best equivalent of a term as a function of its context in the structure produced by the analyser' (Boitet 2000, 335).

As was the case in the work done by Nida, machine translation seeks to find equivalence, an equivalence that aids translatability between languages. However, as we have seen, it does so through what Derrida calls the 'principle of economy' (2011, 179). This principle of economy leaves machine translation open to the effects of decision, as introduced previously. For instance, Davis (2001, 50) notes that the concept of 'translatability,' as opposed to 'untranslatability,' develops from an assumption of meaning as presence. As such, a divide between the terms 'translatability' and 'untranslatability' cannot stand when the metaphysics that it relies on for its foundation is called into question. The terms translatability and untranslatability share commonalities with Derrida's description of 'undecidability.' As discussed earlier in regards to the word *pharmakon*, 'undecidability' does not mean there are only undecidable situations; rather, it 'means' that a decision requires undecidability in order to function as such. Derrida writes: 'A decision can only come into a space that exceeds the calculable program that would destroy all responsibility by transforming it into a programmable effect of determinate causes' (Derrida 1988, 116). Nick Mansfield explains that a decision defies or exceeds calculation, as it cannot be understood as an attempt to determine the correct choice from a list of predetermined options (2006, 480), as that implies that the decision is already decided and thus removes all responsibility from the one making the decision. Likewise, Jack Reynolds (2002, 450) sees this undecidability in all decisions, for it to be a decision and not programmable there needs to be some undecidable aspect to it, an aspect that involves a leap of faith or madness (Caputo 1997, 19; Reynolds 2002, 451).

Generally speaking, the aim of machine translation is precisely this programmability; to match each word or phrase with the closest equivalent. This not only relies on an understanding of language as a stable system with the equivalents remaining

constant, it also assumes the meaning is in the sign itself, not so much the context in which it is written or received. However, Derrida notes in ‘The Double Session’ that:

“Undecidability” is not caused here by some enigmatic equivocality, some inexhaustible ambivalence of a word in a “natural” language... What counts here is not the lexical richness, the semantic infinitiveness of a word or concept, its depth or breadth, the sedimentation that has produced inside it two contradictory layers of signification... What counts here is the formal or syntactical *praxis* that composes and decomposes it (Derrida 2004b, 229).

Derrida’s use of *praxis* is important, as it reveals that the effect of the undecidable is not theoretical or abstract, because it occurs in and through the act of reading and translating. The plurality of meaning in all signs does not occur in isolation; rather, it occurs in the encounter between the sign and the receiver. What Derrida refers to as syntactical *praxis* can be seen as the very act of translation itself: the decomposition of the sign and re-composition into a new language is the very process of translation. As a result, the undecidability that Derrida writes of here, which develops through the lexical breadth and the play of meaning of the determinable context that resists saturation, is found at the very heart of translation. Thus, translation theories that focus on equivalence cannot hope to avoid this undecidability or claim that it is not applicable, for they are one of the formal practices that seek to compose and decompose signs and texts.

Derrida’s undecidability disrupts the notions of equivalence relied upon by machine translation. Machine translation theories envisage languages as systems in which words have applicable words to words in other languages. However, Derrida reveals that the word itself does not produce meaning; rather, meaning is produced through the play of *différance*. As a result, the equivalence relied upon is not guaranteed, in that the process of composition and decomposition is ultimately one of decision and undecidability. Paul Livingston notes that undecidability is not intrinsic in the word itself, rather it is the way it occupies a particular position inside the text, ‘the position, as we may say, of the undecidable, what the text itself, and the logic that governs it, does not give us – for *structural* reasons – the resources to decide’ (Livingston 2010, 224). What is undecidable is not merely the capacity of a single sign to produce multiple or even contradictory meanings, but also the unavoidability of this occurring. As the next few chapters will show, many of Derrida’s quasi-transcendentals – *différance*, *pharmakon*, undecidability, trace, etc. – encapsulate both old and new, and thus a plurality of, meanings. Translation cannot avoid the effects of undecidability and, as a result, all translation (the act, as well as the

reading, of translation) is confronted with the ethical responsibility of interpretation, and which will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

As I have argued thus far, Western translation theory is founded upon a logocentric position that relies on an understanding of origin and presence. Derrida's deconstruction questions this logocentric understanding to the extent that the assumptions made based on presence are revealed to be problematic or flawed. For example, the hierarchies constructed between original text and translation; the debates over word for word or sense that ultimately stem from a metaphysical understanding of presence; and the logic of decision, are all systematically called into question and broken down through a deconstruction of the internal logic of translation, as translation relies upon and makes assumptions regarding the 'ideal' origin and the presence of meaning contained therein. While this chapter has focused on surveying the translation studies literature, presenting debates on translation, and introducing and establishing how Derrida's terms – *différance*, the trace, the supplement, and undecidables – work to reveal the act of deconstruction inside translation theories by revealing their metaphysical assumptions, in the next chapter of the thesis, the aim is to explore Derrida's quasi-transcendental, the 'remains'. I argue that the 'remains' adds new elements and dimensions to the way translation can be understood. As Derrida's quasi-transcendentals are neither synonymous with one another nor interchangeable, I am not merely substituting one term for one that is similar, where either term would achieve the same result. As Derrida argues, while these terms work together, they are not the same; or as Anderson puts it: 'Derrida's neologisms and paleonyms testify to how deconstruction moves across, and becomes different in, multiple contexts:

The word 'deconstruction', like all other words, acquires its value only from its inscription in a chain of possible substitutions, in what is too blithely called a 'context' . . . the word has interest only within a certain context, where it replaces and lets itself be determined by such other words as 'écriture', 'trace', 'différance', 'supplement', 'hymen', 'pharmakon', 'marge', 'entame', 'parergon', etc. By definition, the list can never be closed, and I have cited only names, which is inadequate and done only for reasons of economy (Derrida 1988b, 4-5)' (Anderson 2012, 9).

In establishing the way in which Derrida's quasi-transcendentals work (différance, trace, supplement and undecidability) I have demonstrated how deconstruction can be seen as already at play in translation theory. As part of a 'chain,' the 'remains' is also a deconstructive term, which I apply to translation throughout the rest of this thesis. I use

‘remains’ rather than difference, trace, supplement, etc., because, akin to Ricoeur's work on translation and hospitality, Derrida’s ‘remains’ helps us to think further about the ethics of translation. Therefore, the next chapter will explore what Derrida means when he writes of ‘the remains’ in more detail.

Chapter 2 – Derrida's Remains

Have I constructed something like the matrix, the womb of [Genet's] text? On the basis of which one could read it, that is, re-produce it? No, I see rather (but it may still be a matrix or a grammar) a sort of dredging machine. From the dissimulated, small, closed, glassed-in cabin of a crane, I manipulate some levers and, from afar... I plunge a mouth of steel in the water. And I scrape {*racle*} the bottom, hook onto stones and algae there that I lift up in order to set them down on the ground while the water quickly falls back from the mouth. And I begin to scrape {*rader*}, to scratch, to dredge the bottom of the sea, the mother {*mer*}. I barely hear the noise of the water from the little room. The toothed matrix {*matrice dentée*} only withdraws what it can, some algae, some stones. Some bits {*morceaux*}, since it bites {*mord*}. Detached. But the remain(s) passes between its lips. You do not catch the sea. She always re-forms herself (Derrida 1986b, 204-205).

In the previous chapter, I examined some of the logocentric underpinnings of Western translation theory before revealing how these are called into question by Derrida and other scholars. This deconstruction reveals the inherent metaphysics of presence that underlies Western translation theory, before ultimately questioning the basis of this understanding of presence. However, my deconstruction of translation theory develops upon this through my use of Derrida's quasi-transcendental, the 'remains.' As I will go on to argue, the 'remains' has much in common with many of Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals, such as the 'archive,' hauntology, and the 'trace.' However, there are significant differences that set the 'remains' apart. In light of these differences, it is important to examine the 'remains' in order to understand its role in deconstruction. In a chapter focused on Derrida's remains, John Hillis Miller notes that: 'Many salient examples of the word *reste*, *rester*, or *resistance* may be found scattered throughout Derrida's works, like the ashes of a holocaust victim or a more benign cremation, if there is such a thing. *Reste* and its cognates were important words for him' (Miller 2009, 76). While Miller outlines the importance of the remains for Derrida, it is pivotal to note that he does so by evoking figures of cremation and the holocaust. The notion of a burning sacrifice is important in Derrida's work and, as such, will be explored throughout the final section of this chapter as a prelude to those that follow. Before this thesis can develop an understanding of what the 'remains' adds to the deconstruction of Western translation explored previously, it is important first to explore

how Derrida understands and conceptualises the ‘remains’. Thus, this chapter will address the remains through three understandings provided by Miller in his chapter, mentioned above, before developing upon them further through the work of Derrida and other theorists. As this chapter will argue, the ‘remains’ is characterised by a tension between presence and absence, a tension that is reflected in each of the sections: remains as corpse, remains as corpus, and remains as cinder.

Remains as Corpse

Obsequies of whatever kind in whatever culture tend to have this double, aporetic motive. On the one hand, they want to make sure the dead person is really dead, that he or she will not return as a ghost to haunt the living.... Rituals of obsequy are a way of having done with the dead, washing one’s hands of him or her once and for all. On the other hand, eulogies for the dead, such as graveside orations or tombstone inscriptions, are intended to ensure that the dead will not be forgotten, that they will survive accurately in the memories of the survivors.... This is the aporia of mourning (Miller 2009, 94).

Throughout his chapter on Derrida’s remains, Miller cites several definitions, such as ‘a corpse’ (2009, 75). However, as Miller argues in the quote above, the concept or definition of the remains as a corpse encompasses more than body, in that it also covers the act of remembering and mourning. Specifically, it encompasses the two in such a manner as to render both the body and the act of mourning as problematic. The act of mourning requires the person to have passed, the body to become a corpse, at the very moment it allows for their very survival. The importance of mourning to the remains is evident in Miller’s description that to be human is to feel the need to eulogise the dead in obituaries, tombstones or other markers of their passing, adding that: ‘This need to memorialise the dead was conspicuously and hyperbolically present in Jacques Derrida’ (*ibid*, 90). Derrida’s articles and books, written after the passing of colleagues and philosophers, as *The Work of Mourning* (2003a), create sites from which to look back. However, they also act as sites of grieving and remembering. Thus, the remains as corpse is inherently tied to the act of grieving over the body as much as to the body itself.

After Derrida’s passing, the works written to mark his passing function in a similar way as a tombstone or marker. In his introduction to the collection of works entitled *Adieu Derrida* (2007) Costas Douzinas outlines the understanding of the remains as a site of mourning, specifically through the concept of the proper name. Exploring the duality of the

proper name through the baptism from its origin in the other who names, to the eulogy where it lives on in others, he explains:

The good words, the good reasons of the *eulogos* will have confined the name *in memoriam*, in the recollection of mourning and memory. It is in this sense, that my name is never mine; answering my name, signing in my name anticipates the point where I and my name will be gathered together by others, in memory (Douzinas 2007, 8).

Douzinas makes several key arguments here, such as the ownership of the proper name. However, it is his description of the gathering in the memory of others that is important here. The body remains not just physically, but also internalised into others, gathered and held by the other. This internalising of the body by others is where the understanding of the remains as corpse becomes increasing complex. Through the work of mourning and remembering, the proper name becomes what is left behind when one has passed, it is what remains, and it is invoked when one wishes to speak of those who have past. This ties back to Miller's point about the remains as corpse, not as the physical body as such, but the remains *of* the physical body; the remains as the memorial monument, which is used to show a person was there. Peggy Kamuf's work *To Follow* (2010b) captures this memorial of the proper name, noting how Derrida's name allows the essays captured in the book to function, 'at least for some time yet' (2), for as long as they share Derrida's name; as long as his name has meaning. Those to whom the name has meaning, who recall his proper name and hold it in mourning, hold it in themselves in his absence.

This gathering of the self into others is not a voluntary act, a point which will become more significant in the second understanding, rather it is always a possibility despite any attempts to avoid it. This is especially evident in the case of Derrida's passing. Miller notes that while Derrida himself refused eulogies at his funeral (2009, 91), the numerous works written since his passing remain as sites of mourning nonetheless. Geoffrey Bennington's essays published in *Not Half No End* (2010) are not just essays on Derrida's work; they include reflections on Derrida the man, and the friendship Bennington shared with him. The essays practice a kind of mourning, what Bennington terms '*demi-deuil*' or half mourning: 'a kind of structural state of not getting over it, and therefore remaining permanently somewhat short of *recovery*' (Bennington 2010, xii). Thus, the remains as corpse takes on greater importance; it is no longer merely an act of reflecting, it is the partial recovery or holding on to the person, the remains takes upon this presence of

an absence. As this thesis will go on to demonstrate, this tension and slippage between presence and absence is a fundamental characteristic of the remains.

For as long as works on Derrida exist, they act as a site of mourning that disrupts or prohibits the mourning process. This state of permanently halting short of recovery manifests as a result of the ghosts that haunt through the mourning, the spectres we evoke of the dead when we mourn. This link between the remains and the spectre is evident in Gayatri Spivak's paper, published in *Adieu Derrida*, where she notes how the 'public part of mourning is not an unimportant step in the releasing of the ghost in us' (2007, 47). Once more, the books that commemorate, the tombstones and obituaries, are all public markers in that they stand in for that which is absent, they mark passing through their presence. Yet there is a confluence of incomplete presence and absence evident in Spivak's use of the term ghost: the ghost in us who is not part of us, the ghost of who is absent yet present inside of ourselves. The remains as corpse straddles this uneasy link between the absence of the person with the presence of the memory and site of mourning. Yet, there is a contradiction of sorts in this understanding, the public mourning through the eulogy and act of remembrance, as the remains are held in the memory of the person who mourns. Douzinas' mourning is not the same as that of Bennington nor Spivak, who are different again to others *ad infinitum*. The absence of Derrida is universal, yet the presence of the memory or spectre is individual and thus singular. This confluence of universal and singular is crucial to the importance the remains has for translation, as will be argued in the final chapter of this thesis. However, for now, it is pivotal that while the act of mourning is public, yet the presence of the spectre is held in solitude.

In a move that resonates across the other definitions of the remains explored in this chapter, the remains is no longer an easily discernable figure, if we understand this as something discrete that can be mourned for something passed and gone. The remains of the body resists this understanding of a figure; rather, it haunts the site as an ineffable figure or spectre, which is why Bennington writes of the incomplete recovery from mourning. This resistance is evident when Derrida explores the issue of haunting and the spectre in *Spectre of Marx* (2006):

If it – learning to live – remains to be done, it can happen only between life and death. Neither in life nor in death alone. What happens between two, and between all the "two's" one likes, such as between life and death, can only maintain itself with some ghost, can only talk with or about some ghost

[s' entretenir de quelque fantôme]... And this being-with specters would also be, not only but also, a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations (Derrida 2006, xvii-xviii).

The dual nature or in-between aspect of the spectre as both between life and death is once more evident in this passage. While this 'both/and' nature will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter, from this passage, it is evident that the spectre of the person that remains resists all attempts to classify it as one side or another, as alive in discourse or dead and silent. This is due to the manner in which the remembrance of the body works, as what is remembered is not simply the body, as alluded to earlier. The remains of the body is not the body itself, nor is it not the body, in the sense that it could be viewed as something standing in for the body. Rather, the remains of the body is a spectre that is neither alive nor dead (*ibid*, xvii-xviii). This results in a kind of conflicting remembrance, one that is also a cause for mourning. Despite all attempts to hold onto the person who has passed, the memory of them remains an incomplete copy or marker. Despite all attempts, the memory will never replace nor capture the body. Thus, one mourns for both the person lost as well as for that which the memory cannot capture. This will be further explained, with its importance to translation, in the final chapter of this thesis.

Returning to the tension between presence and absence, Anais Spitzer notes a similar tension between presence and absence at play in Derrida's use of the crypt:

Every system unwittingly includes an undialecticisable kernel (crypt) that both figures and disfigures it from *within*. Just as remains proved to be basic to the system that attempts to exclude them, and just as tears are *always already*, the crypt is the scar that marks the impossibility of *savoir absolu* and of philosophy proper. Cryptic remains cannot be assimilated or digested. Despite efforts to cut off this unnaturalised foreigner by locking it away in a safe hidden deep inside, the threat it poses to *logos*' reign cannot be ameliorated. The system includes, *as the very condition of its possibility*, that which escapes systematization (Spitzer 2011, 43).

In a definition that will have significant importance in the following chapters, Spitzer describes this kernel¹² or crypt as part of the system (within the system) at the very moment

¹² It is important to note that the use of 'kernel' by Spitzer is different to the understanding used by Nida and the machine translation scholars. Where Nida and machine translation posited that the kernel was a knowable entity, in that it was the core meaning of the word or phrase, Spitzer uses it to denote an unknowable or inscrutable part of the system; something that resists interpretation yet lies at the very heart of the system itself.

it renders itself closed off. Yet this crypt is also inherently foreign. This is the consequence of the remains as corpse, as the body that is remembered, the spectre that haunts, is not our own. This issue of the foreign in the crypt and remains will be discussed further in the final chapter in regards to hospitality and translation. However, it is important to note that in describing the role of alterity in the system, Spitzer refers to both the crypt and the remains. The crypt of the other, the crypt that stands in for and holds the remains of the body, is once more neither completely present in the system, not completely absent; there is no amelioration from this both/and. Thus, the remains is understood as something that resists a totalising system. Moreover, the remains is a fundamental or basic part of the very system that seeks to exclude it.

The remains of the body, the remains we cite when we mourn, thus also become the crypt of the body, the resting place in which we hold the corpse. Noting that the crypt is built to hide something dead, Derrida explains that it holds something dead in order to keep the corpse safe ‘from life and from death’ (Derrida 1986c, xxi). In keeping the corpse safe from life and death, Derrida argues that we stop the corpse from becoming part of either definition: ‘The inhabitant of a crypt is always a living dead, a dead entity we are perfectly willing to keep alive, but as dead, one we are willing to keep, as long as we keep it, within us, intact in any way save as living’ (*ibid*, xxi). As long as we incorporate them inside ourselves, the other cannot be thought of as present nor absent in a complete sense of either word. This leads Derrida to conclude once more on the impossibility of complete mourning due to the holding of the other in the crypt:

The fact that the cryptic incorporation always marks an effect of impossible or refused mourning (melancholy or mourning) is ceaselessly confirmed by *The Magic Word*. But at the same time the incorporation is never finished. It should even be said: It never finishes anything off (*ibid*, xxi).

As with Bennington’s description of half-mourning, Derrida reveals an originary deconstruction at the heart of the concept of closure through mourning, of letting something or someone pass. This inability to mourn completely and the part it plays for survival will be explored in more detail in the fourth chapter of this thesis; however, it is important to note the tension of presence and absence that comes through the understanding of the remains as corpse. Where the remains can stand for a corpse, as cited at the beginning of this section, it also marks the site of the present absence of the person.

The difficulty of limiting the definition of the remains to either the presence or absence of the person in the corpse is developed by Douzinas when he writes:

When I offer a eulogy to Derrida, I who met him a few times but did not know *him*, in the sense of being a personal friend, I address ‘Derrida’, a huge thesaurus of texts, stories, lectures, occasional encounters, an immense body of work, work without a body. ‘Derrida’ is a huge world, an ecumene and cosmopolis but also an intimate part of my own world, my thoughts, memories, emotions and acts (Douzinas 2007, 9).

The remains as corpse, in the obituaries and eulogies that mark the person, now lead into the second understanding of the remains. What remains is more than just the body, especially in the case of what remains of theorists such as Derrida, as Douzinas notes the immensity that is conveyed in the proper name ‘Derrida.’ While the eulogies that are written become sites for mourning, Derrida’s work becomes something separate or different from this. Rather than acting as a memorial, like a photograph or a memento, Derrida’s work becomes an inheritance, something to be passed on. As argued by Derrida in *Spectres of Marx*, cited above, being with spectres is an issue of inheritance. What remains is also the writing; the remains of the body is also the remains of a body of writing.

Remains as Corpus

What will happen, or should happen, to Derrida’s remains, now that he is, so to speak, dead, and therefore at the mercy of others? Who should have responsibility for deciding about that? What is the destiny of Derrida’s legacy? Will Derrida’s work continue to be read or will it be rapidly forgotten? Will what Derrida wrote and said, that is, his “remains,” be understood and appropriated correctly, or will they be misunderstood and misappropriated.... How should his work be used productively, now that he is dead? How would we (or I) wish it to be used (Miller 2009, 73)

Similar to the remains as corpse, the remains as corpus or legacy is not a simple definition. As noted by Miller in the quote above, the remains of Derrida are left to the mercy of others, passed on as a gift or inheritance to those that survive. Numerous books and articles have been written which try to explain and outline the continued relevance of Derrida’s work. Collected volumes such as *Derrida: Negotiating the Legacy* (Fagan et al. (eds) 2007) and *Derrida’s Legacies: Literature and Philosophy* (Glendenning and Eaglestone (eds) 2008) combine the notion of a legacy with writings that explore Derrida’s work or apply his quasi-transcendentals and deconstructive reading strategies to new concepts or events. This is

continued in books such as *In Memory of Jacques Derrida* (2009), in which Nicholas Royle explains in the foreword that:

[Derrida] made – and his writing still makes and will continue to make – earthquakes in thinking. I believe in many ways, indeed, the reading of his work is still ahead of us, scarcely begun... His thinking on politics, ethics and responsibility, democracy, law and justice, will stimulate, encourage and empower for years to come (Royle 2009, ix).

As with the first definition of the remains as corpse, Royle speaks of Derrida's writing as both present and active as well as passive or in the past. Derrida's writings, in both his published and unpublished work, are what remain (of Derrida), and these are part of the immense meaning that is conveyed through Derrida's name, through his signature. The use of the word 'legacy' in the titles of these books presents Derrida's writings and work, his remains, as a gift to be passed on, like an inheritance or a trust for future generations. Derrida's writings are still his, in this understanding of the legacy, but they are bequeathed to others.

However, Miller questions whether Derrida views his own work, or indeed writing in general, as a simple legacy or gift. Specifically, Miller describes how Derrida understands *reste* not so much as his legacy, rather as the process in which he sees himself as disarmed and handed over to others; his remains as the corpus that is picked over after he has gone. Miller cites a passage from *The Beast and the Sovereign (Two)* to highlight what he identifies as Derrida's anxiety over the remains of his corpus after his death (Miller 2009, 74).

To be dead, before meaning something completely different, signifies, for me, to be delivered, in what remains of me [*dans ce qui reste de moi*], as in all my remains [*comme dans tous mes restes*], to be exposed or delivered without any possible defence, once totally disarmed, to the other, to the others (Derrida cited in Miller 2009, 72).

Thus, the remains as the corpus is one that encapsulates the loss of control the writer faces through his or her demise if, indeed, a writer could be seen as ever having control to lose. This seems different from the previous understanding of the remains as the body; where before it was the name that occupied the place of the body, now it is the concepts or ideas that remain for the author; concepts and ideas that are open to translation and interpretation. However, as cited in the previous section, Douzinas argues that the proper name is held by

others and is never truly our own. Thus, there is a similarity between the two understandings of the remains, evident through the name or signature. The name that is held by others in obituaries and eulogies is much like the signature in the text that is left behind for others.

This leaving behind, this legacy, is what causes Derrida's alarm. The anxiety Derrida writes of, which he finds in the face of his own remains, develops in his writings where he discusses the role of inheritance or '*filiation*' in relation to the remains. For instance, at the start of the Hegel column of *Glas*, Derrida begins by writing: 'what, after all, of the remain(s), today, for us, here, now, of a Hegel?' (1986a, 1). This opens his reflections on Hegel's notion of the family, a theme that is explored throughout the text, in a move that can be read as an ancestral rite (Spivak 1977, 1); the remains of the corpus of Hegel the Father as Derrida's inheritance. Spivak explores the relationship between the corpus and inheritance further when she writes:

Toward the end of *Glas*, Derrida will come (almost) to eat Hegel as Saturn (almost) ate Jupiter and thus try to change Hegel's Seminar (a seed-plot, a school for turning the son into a father) into a Saturnalia, where master and slave exchange places provisionally. Paradoxically, to eat Father thus is not merely to scatter but in-corporate – the best way to mourn and heal (*ibid*, 23).

To eat the father through the assimilation of the corpus is tied to the notion of the remains through the way the French term *reste* can be used. As Miller notes: '*Reste* in French is more likely to be used... to name what is left over after a collective meal, the remains of a feast' (Miller 2009, 75). This understanding of the remains as after a meal is echoed in the notion of '*cascade de restes*,' which Pleshette DeArmitt translates as the 'downpour of leftovers' (DeArmitt 2016, 98). These take on a symbolic gesture, as the leftovers of the sacrifice for the gods become a purifying and sacred feast for the ancestral males and their sons (*ibid*, 100), in another act of filiation.

Micahel Naas links this concept of leftover scraps to Derrida's own legacy, writing that:

'[i]t was as if he had been feeding us for nearly thirty years the remains of a meal that had itself never been served.... These remains, these remainders, these *restes*, were more than just tantalising morsels... it did seem as if they were the leftovers of something more substantial or sustaining, something that would put the notion of *le reste* or *la restance* on the same table as those other operative terms of deconstruction (Naas 2016, 107-108).

I will turn to the latter part of this quote at the conclusion of this thesis, as it is the intention of the next chapters to outline the role that the remains plays in deconstruction and how it differs from and works alongside the other 'operative' terms that Naas identifies. However, it is important to note once more the concept of Derrida's legacy in terms normally reserved for food or a meal. Thus, when one speaks of Derrida's remains, it carries the concept of the cannibalism of the corpus/corpse that is delivered over to others to be consumed as inheritance, a legacy that remains in and through his archive. Derrida's corpus is thus the remains of those theorists who came before him, as well as his contemporaries. In leaving behind his published and unpublished work, Derrida leaves his corpus behind like an inheritance, invoking notions of filiation, of the relation between father and son. Derrida's remains can be understood then as both the remains of the body, insofar as we can see it as a site for mourning, as well as the remains of his corpus, that which is used in the assimilation and continuation of Derrida's writings and ideas. Miller notes the play between these two definitions due to the linguistic or semantic similarity between corpse and corpus, explaining how the phrase '*tous mes restes*, "all my remains," plays on the double meaning of "remains" as my dead body and the writings I leave behind me' (Miller 2009, 74-75).

As with the role of mourning, this understanding of the remains as corpus contains a tension between presence and absence, which is evident in the nature of the signature itself. It is Derrida's signature in his work that makes it both his own and also his legacy to others. Akin to the first understanding, the signature occupies both the presence of the author in signing yet also their absence as they leave behind a mark that claims the work as their own. In a manner similar to the understanding of the spectre as both alive and dead, the signature, for Derrida, is neither completely inside nor outside the text. Returning to *Glas*, Derrida poses a question over where the signature remains. Derrida writes: 'The stake of the signature – does the signature take place? where? how? why? for whom.... As for the general textuality, perhaps the *seing* represents the case, the place for (topically and tropically) overlapping the intrinsic and extrinsic' (Derrida 1986a, 3-4). The divide between the interior and exterior, whether the signature is intrinsic or extrinsic to the text, touches on the divide to be explored throughout this thesis, that between permanence and remainder. An understanding of an ideal permanence of the sign falls back upon this prior understanding of interiority that is at its heart an understanding of logocentrism through the origin. Like all signs, the signature can only function if it can be repeated and, like all signs,

it stands in for an absence, the absence of the person who signs. This is why the signature, which Derrida refers to above as *seing*, is much like the spectre or the remains as mourning. The dual nature of the signature, as it occupies a place both inside the text as it refers to something outside, exposes the tension between the divide between interior and exterior. This is why Derrida refers to it as the overlapping between the intrinsic and extrinsic (Derrida 1986a, 4).

This inside and outside nature of a text or reading falls back upon the location of the signature, which stands in for the location of the author in the text, as there is the question of whether the signature belongs to the text itself or whether it belongs to the author and thus resides outside the text. Derrida deals with both these scenarios in turn, starting with signature belonging inside the text. He concludes that if the signature is in the text, it 'no longer signs, operates as an effect within the object, plays a piece in what it claims to appropriate or to lead back to its origin. The filiation is lost' (Derrida 1986a, 4). On the other hand, it is not so simple to conclude that the signature resides inside the text, as Derrida explains:

Second case: the signature holds itself, as is generally believed, outside the text. The signature emancipates as well the product that dispenses with the signature, with the name of the father or of the mother the product no longer needs to function. The filiation again gives itself up, is always betrayed by what remarks it (Derrida 1986a, 4).

If the signature resides outside the text than the text would not need the signature to exist or work as a text (Todd 1986, 4), which is why Derrida sees it as relinquishing the function of the mother or father. Derrida concludes that the signature belongs wholly to neither case, as neither of them manages to completely capture the movement of signing, the movement of the name. The name belongs to both the author and the text, and thus to neither, as aspects of the name must resist the reading and live on as a remainder. Derrida explains that 'the name is not, as it seems on the first approach, a thing encountered in nature or acquired in commerce. The name seems produced, one time only, by an act without past' (Derrida 1986a, 6). The name is thus both a gift and a limiter, like all legacies. Through the act of signing, the author simultaneously bequeaths his or her own name while also becoming limited by the name, classified as a 'thing.' This act of naming through the signature is similar to the work of the proper name explored in the understanding of the

remains as corpse. Much like the proper name that is held by others in mourning, the signature ultimately belongs to others as a legacy.

The similarity between the corpse and corpus through the proper name and signature continues through Derrida's use of the tomb. As with the crypt, which Spitzer describes as both inside the system yet separate from it, the signature is equally difficult to pin down. Ultimately, the signature reveals the tension between interior and exterior, as it belongs wholly to neither. In a movement similar to that of the supplement, as explored in the previous chapter, the signature represents both inside and outside, as it remains inside and yet separate from the text it signs; they are 'entombed'. Derrida explains: 'The text re(mains)-falls (to the tomb), the signature re(mains)-falls (tombs)-the text. The signature remain(s) resides and falls (to the tomb), the signature remain(s) house and tomb' (Derrida 1986a, 4-5). This entombed state is important in that it reveals that the remains as corpus continues to problematise the divide between presence and absence. As with the body and the crypt, the signature is understood as falling back towards the text, back to the tomb. This entombment is particularly important to translation, as will be explored in the fourth and fifth chapters.

These first two definitions or understandings of the remains offer many similarities, namely in the tension between presence and absence and the work of mourning and inheritance this tension facilitates. While both can be described simply, as corpse or as corpus, the reality is much more complex. The remains take on much more than the person, yet also in a way much less, as it becomes a presence that stands in for an absence. In this way, the remains functions much like the sign, insofar as the sign becomes a mark for something not present. Yet this memory of the person or legacy or their writing is imperfect, as we cannot recreate the person from a memory nor can we inherit Derrida's work as our own. This is why I argue that the remains reveals a tension between presence and absence, as it allows for a recognition of presence, in that there was something there, but what remains of them only does so in order to highlight the absence of the passing. As such, there is also an element of temporality involved in the remains, as will be explored in more detail in the following chapter, as the remains points towards an object or person in the past. But this link to the past is not complete, as it cannot lead one back to the object or person with any certainty, it is not a transcendental signified.

This temporality connects back to the manner in which Miller describes Derrida's use of the remains in relation to his understanding of the holocaust. This holocaust, or all is burned, renders the initial object unrecognisable as it destroys it, yet there are traces that remain in the ash or cinder. As with the previous understandings, this concept of ash or cinder resists simple definitions or understandings. Ned Lukacher offers this explanation in the introduction to his translation of Derrida's *Cinders*:

‘Cinders are the quarks of language, neither proper names nor metaphors, the traces of neither ontotheology nor of the generalization of metaphor, naming neither truth nor its impossibility, but all the while keeping a space open into which the truth, or its impossibility, might come, a space, as Derrida calls it, for the in-vention, the in-*venire*) the in-coming of the other’ (Lukacher in Derrida 1991, 1).

Lukacher's description of cinders as neither proper names nor metaphors relates back to the argument of this chapter. As I have argued, the remains as corpse and as corpus are more than markers of the body or writing. Rather, the remains as body is both the marker, through the eulogy and the proper name, yet also spectre or ghost. In order to explore this further, it is necessary to turn to the third and final understanding explored in this chapter: the remains as cinder.

Remains as Cinder

This remainder *seems* to remain of what was, and was presently; it seems to nourish itself or quench its thirst at the spring of being-present, but it emerges from being, it uses up in advance the being from which it seems to draw. The remnance of the remainder – ash, almost nothing – is not the being-that-remains, if, at least, one understands by that a being-that-subsists (Derrida 1994, 27).

The final understanding focuses on Miller's description of the remains as: ‘all that is left after other parts have been *taken away, used up, or destroyed*’ (Miller 2009, 75 own emphasis). ‘All that is left’ could lead to an understanding of the remains as a physical remainder that can be demarcated as an object, as in that which remains is clearly defined from that which was taken away. Yet, as evident in the first two definitions, this view is problematic. The remains of the person in the memory is not easily defined, for the spectre that haunts is not a presence one can point to, nor an absence one can ignore. Indeed, Derrida is careful to avoid this understanding, stating in an interview with Antoine Spire

recorded in *Paper Machine* that '[t]he remaining of the remainder [*La restance du reste*] is not reducible to an actual residue, or to what is left after a subtraction, either. The remainder *is* not, it is not a being [*un étant*], not a modification of that which is' (Derrida 2005, 151). While the following chapter will provide a more in-depth exploration of the remains as between being and non-being, presence and absence, what Derrida is highlighting here is that the remains cannot be thought of as a demarcated part of something that was there previously. This definition of the remainder as 'not a being' moves Derrida's quasi-transcendental away from a physical product that is the result of a subtraction or removal, towards one that is harder to define. The dangers of a physical understanding of the remains lie in the logic this leads to if one follows it to its conclusion. If there is an understanding or conception of the remains as a delineated object, then combining the reading with the remains would present a unified totality; it would be to present a complete understanding and view of the sign. Given that Derrida's writings seek to reveal the work of deconstruction in the logic of totalities and universal understandings, as evident in the previous chapter, it would be antithetical to take this view of the remains as a clearly defined result of a reading, as a definable by-product that is left after other parts are removed.

Derrida's definition of a remainder that is not present is echoed in the epigraph cited at the start of this section, as well as that from the beginning of this chapter. Both speak of something that remains, yet it is impossible to discern with any great certainty the exact nature or process of the remains. Indeed, it is difficult even to understand if the remains is a concept or a process. The epigraph at the start of this chapter relates the process of reading to that of dredging a harbour. It is important to note that Derrida does not equate the remains to a physical mark, for, as shown previously, this would be a problematic equation. While Derrida writes of how in collecting parts of the sea, he cannot escape having water and silt fall back as visible returns, as a physically demarcated substance, the final sentence of the passage calls this understanding into question. While the water and silt are visible in that they can be seen returning to the sea as they fall, they cannot be clearly demarcated as remains. Once they return, it is impossible to separate what fell back from what was always there. That is to say, that which falls back as a remainder, reforms itself with that which is around it: 'She always re-forms herself' (Derrida 1986b, 205). Whereas, the second epigraph concludes with Derrida noting that the remnant of the remainder is not that which remains, if one takes the remains to be an object which is present to us, a 'being which

subsists.’ This echoes the passage by Derrida quoted previously, where he warns of the misunderstanding that occurs by identifying the remains as being present after a reading has taken the other parts away.

However, both Derrida and Miller are careful to explain that this does not mean that we can only speak of the remains as intangible. To do so would run the risk of dividing the sign into an inside, that which remains and is never known, and an outside which is what is taken, a divide between phenomena and *noemena*. Indeed, Derrida argues that one can refer to a certain thing or aspect as remaining after a given reading or interpretation, describing them as ‘remainder effects’:

What we are saying at the moment is not reducible to the notes you are taking, the recording we are making, or the words I am uttering – to what will remain [*restera*] of it in the world. The remains of what remains cannot be calculated in this way. But there will also be remainder effects, sentences fixed on paper, more or less readable and reproducible. These remainder effects will thereby have presence effects – differently in one place or another, and in an extremely uneven way according to the contexts and the subjects that will get attached to it (Derrida 2005, 152).

This need for a remainder effect is evident in the previous two understandings also. In the remains as corpse there is a requirement for the tombstone, eulogy, or crypt with which to memorialise and house the person who has passed. In the second, the signature and the text are passed on; thus, they must exist as an effect. As I will argue throughout this final section, the remains as cinder also carries within it the need for both the remainder effect as well as the parts that resist these calculations. Indeed, it is this combination that once again marks the necessary tension between presence and absence that is characterised by the remains.

This third understanding, the remains as cinder, develops from the first two as it continues to carry within itself the echo of mourning that haunted the prior definitions. If we turn back to the third definition quoted from Miller earlier, we can read the remains as coming after everything else is ‘destroyed’. In the case of the remains the destruction comes at the hand of fire, after what Derrida refers to as the holocaust [all is burned] (1991, 57). Derrida writes that he associates the remains with the notion of *la cendre*, translated by Bowlby in *Paper Machine* as ‘ashes.’ However, it is more commonly translated as ‘cinder,’ most notably in the work *Cinders* (1991). The cinder continues Derrida’s connection

between the remains and mourning, as Mark Dooley and Liam Kavanagh note: ‘Cinders symbolise the remains of something that was formerly present but is now dead. While they bear witness to the existence of something, they never reveal what that something was’ (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 7). This attribute of the cinder, its ability to symbolise but not reveal, is due to the way in which the cinder is both the unreadable trace of what was and the indestructible trace of that which we wanted to destroy, as will be developed in the following chapter.

However, it is important to note how the remains as cinder is understood and described in similar language to that of corpse and corpus. For example, Dooley and Kavanagh cite the way Derrida understands the act of mourning as both one in which we long to hold on to that which has passed, while simultaneously desiring to let go and move on, as explored earlier. The remains as cinder resists both of these urges though, or to put it differently, it is the constant possibility of both and neither at the same time, for to burn something ‘is to desire *both* to keep it *and* to let it go’ (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 15); to keep its secret safe in the memory while destroying what it was. The understanding of the remains as cinder disrupts any notion of unity in mourning, whether it is mourning for the corpse or the corpus, as any attempt to preserve the remainder of someone or their writing is to destroy it through the logic of the archive. Miller (2009, 80) describes this logic when he writes that to archive something is both to preserve it as well as aid in its forgetting and eventual destruction. David Michael Levin notes that the holocaust (all is burned) runs throughout Derrida’s work, developing a theme of mourning that is both a denial of death through the making present and a letting go (Levin 2003, 287). It is at this moment that the importance of the first two understandings is clear. Once more, there is a disruption of mourning, of presence and absence. The cinder becomes both the sign and the sign destroyed. Yet once more, there is also a link back to mourning for what was lost, in that the remains becomes a marker for loss, both of what has passed and what can no longer be remembered.

Herman Rapaport further explains the connection between the holocaust and the cinder when he describes the concept of the cinder as ‘the trace of self-annihilating trauma, the remainder of the destruction of memory’ (Rapaport 2003, 91). Derrida himself associates the destruction of memory with the incineration of a holocaust, that which leads to the cinder, as he explains in an interview with Weber:

There is a concept of cinders, that is not really debatable. One can analyse it. The cinder is that thing – the cinder is a thing – that remains after a material has burned... But from the moment this concept of the cinders becomes the figure for everything that precisely loses its figure in incineration and thus in a certain disappearance of the support or of the body whose memory is kept by the cinders, at that moment the cinders is no longer a determined concept (1995a, 391).

Derrida is not debating whether there is a thing as the remains, whether one can refer to something by that name. Rather, he questions the ability for this term to stand in for something else, to stand in the place of the figure that has been destroyed by the fire. The more one tries to grasp the cinder, the more it crumbles and falls as ash (Hawkes 2012, 936), which is why the cinder is seen as leaving no trace to follow (Hughes 2004, 52-53). The cinder, as the remains, is not a physical thing, nor can it be thought of a being that is present as such. As a result of this, what the remains or the cinder marks is not that which has been destroyed nor that which resists as ash. This would reduce the remains to a mathematical formula whereby the object minus what is burned in the fire equals the remains and thus conceive of the cinder or remains as a physical mark. As noted earlier, while there are remainder effects in all three of the definitions, by no means can the remains be understood as consisting solely of these effects. What Derrida is remarking on here is that there is a concept of the cinder, and there are ashes, but the concept of the cinder does not take the place of the ashes or stand in its place as a physical mark.

To explain this further, Derrida argues that while we can speak of the cinder as coming from a determined thing, once we can only see it as a cinder, we can no longer understand it as filling in for what was; it is no longer a suitable object to mourn yet it does not disappear. As Derrida explains in the passage cited above (1995a, 391), the cinder can be understood as both the remains and as well as the remainder effect, which is why it undermines mourning; it is not a physical thing to mourn yet it is not completely absent. Rapaport develops this understanding of the cinder beyond a concept of mourning, to one pertaining to issues in philosophy and literature as well, noting how the notion of the cinder or remains is associated with Derrida's understanding of survival, in a sense of living on (Rapaport 1994, 230). This connection between the cinder and survival will be explored in greater detail in the fourth chapter of this thesis. For now, this connection reveals that the remains as cinder also has ramifications for language. Just as the act of mourning cannot completely keep or destroy the cinder, neither can a reading. It is this understanding that

leads Rapaport to conceptualise this understanding of survival through the remainder in light of Derrida's work on the 'Postcard.' Rapaport argues, 'the arrival of the letter always discloses something else of the writer's destiny, an event in which the written says something else about the name that has preceded its coming and which is not easily recoverable by *even a reader who has authored the message*' (1994, 235 own emphasis). Of note in this passage is the notion that the cinder, the burnt remains, resists the author who created the message just as it resists the one who mourns for what is now the cinder. Where the first two understandings of the remains were characterised by the remains and others, specifically the others that survive to mourn and inherit, this third and final understanding reveals that the author or person themselves, he or she who has passed, is also an other to their remains. The sign remains separate from an elusive to all, even those who place their signature within the text.

For Derrida, there is no mastery of language that can be seen as prohibiting the remains, for there is no way that any reader, even if they are the author, can completely own and control language. He explores this at the start of *Cinders* in a passage through which he questions his relationship with the phrase 'cinders there is' [*il y a là cendre*]:

More than 15 years ago a phrase came to me, as though in spite of me; to be more precise, it returned, unique, uniquely succinct, almost mute. I thought I had calculated it cunningly, mastered and overwhelmed it, as if I had appropriated it once and for all. Since then, I have repeatedly had to yield to the evidence: the phrase dispensed with all authorisation, she had lived without me. She, the phrase, had always lived alone (Derrida 1991, 21).

Even to the one who wrote it, the cinder is not a masterable concept. This is why Derrida writes that the cinder cannot be thought of as something present in taking the place of something else. The cinder is the result of a failure to completely grasp or destroy. The cinder allows the survival of the text or sign even through the loss of control of the author.

Echoing Levinas' concept of the *il y a*, the insomnia of the other night which challenges the assumed mastery we think we have over objects and concepts (Levinas 1978), Derrida comes to terms throughout *Cinders* (1991) with a phrase or sign that ultimately escapes him, that remains separate. Following the logic of the postcard, Derrida refers to himself as a different person to who he is at this new moment. The author of Derrida's earlier works, the texts in which the phrase 'cinders there is' appears, Derrida names 'he' as opposed to myself or me, and, as a result, he speaks of the person as someone

separate to himself. This is evidenced in the following passage of Derrida's: 'regardless what he may say, "cinder there is" remains his' (1991, 41). Exactly what it is that 'remains his' is not clear though, for, as this chapter has explored previously, the remains is not a physical thing that one could point to and identify as such. It remains that Derrida wrote the phrase, and yet it remains that this phrase escapes Derrida as even he cannot completely understand it, yet what remains from Derrida's attempts to understand is indistinguishable from what remains from any other attempt to understand. It is not possible to demarcate the remains in this way; rather, it escapes these definitions or moments of production at the very moment it is produced by them. It is at this point that, once again, we can see a confluence of the three understandings as the remains resists all three understandings as much as they define the remains. What is clear, and indeed what is crucial to my thesis, is that as much as they have differences, what is similar across these understandings is the tension of both presence and absence. The remains becomes a site of something that is both, that resists both as it is simultaneously a marker for absent as it is present.

In the introduction to his translation of Derrida's *Cinders*, Ned Lukacher notes that the cinder is what lies outside of the circle of the message going from sender to receiver, the closed circle of meaning. Lukacher furthers this understanding of the remains as non-being when he writes that 'the cinder is not the letter nor the word but what precedes it; and what precedes the letter has already been burned' (Derrida 1991, 11). However, Derrida is also careful not to perpetuate the logocentric understanding of origin. Rather than suggesting the existence of a pure sign that is 'burned' or made imperfect through its appearance in common or everyday language, Derrida instead argues that there is no letter or word that can precede the cinder. Thus, there is no sign *before* the remains; rather, from the moment there was one, there was the other. Derrida's notion of the remains is thus understood by theorists such as Lukacher and Derrida as existing outside language, outside the message, though its effects through the remainder are not outside of language. The importance of the cinder to mourning, existing neither as monument nor as passed memory yet somehow as both, comes from the role the cinder as remains plays in language, as the burning of language that occurs outside of the circle of the message (Lukacher 1991, 11). Both Derrida and Lukacher argue that the remains exists outside of this communication model, the circle of meaning between sender and receiver, as it comes from neither the translator nor the reader. Instead, the remains is tied to the signs themselves; it is not a question of either the reader or the translator bringing this gap to language through the

encounter with the foreign other, the remains is a very part of the word, a part that disrupts any understanding of the origin as a pure sign.

In linking the remains with the metaphor of the cinder, Derrida further elaborates on the earlier point around the impossibility of distinguishing the identity of the remains. This reinforces the understanding that there doesn't have to be a specific remainder, rather the remains is always there as a possibility of something else. Lukacher outlines the importance this unidentifiable nature has for language when he writes of the cinders as 'all that remain of the path that might someday lead back (or forward) to the origin of language, the path that opens the possibilities of the metaphoric and the literal without being reducible to either of them' (1991, 1). Lukacher's use of the notion of a 'path' evokes Derrida's notion of the trace, echoing the link between the trace and the cinder that Derrida himself explores when he observes that his quasi-transcendental of the trace is not to suggest the 'trail of the hunt' nor the 'furrow in the sand', rather it is the cinder, which he describes as 'what remains without remaining from the holocaust, from the all-burning' (Derrida 1991, 43). The cinder or the remains is not quite the same as the trace; they are not synonyms of one another. However, Derrida does connect them through the way he defines the movement of the cinder as similar to that of the trace, as is explored further in the following chapter. Directly after the passage from his interview with Weber cited earlier, Derrida elaborates on the differences when he says: 'The difference between the trace "cinder" and other traces is that the body of which cinders is the trace has totally disappeared' (1995a, 391). This difference has to do with the temporal movement of the remains and the cinder, a temporal movement that is different from that of the trace. Where the trace defers on to other signs, the cinder defers back upon the earlier form of the sign itself, as the next chapter will argue in more depth. Rapaport continues this understanding of the cinder as a trace that cannot be followed when he writes that 'The cinder, in other words, is not what points to a path or road... Rather, as trace the cinder speaks from beyond an event to which we cannot retrace our steps, an event from which the subject is foreclosed' (Rapaport 1994, 232). The inability to retrace or reform the body from which the cinder came is due to the fragility of the cinder, 'however softly one touches it, it falls' (Derrida 1991, 43), with Lukacher adding that 'we should remember that the delicate vulnerability of a cinder leaves open the question of its being or non-being' (Lukacher 1991, 2). The cinder falls back to ash as the water falls back from the dredger's mouth, falling back as remains.

Despite the work undertaken on the remains throughout this chapter, it is still problematic to speak of an understanding of the remains, despite having tracked its definition from the corpse or corpus of one who has passed, to the understanding of it as that which disrupts the unity of mourning as it disrupts the unity of language itself. In attempting to elaborate on it further, Derrida returns to the non-being of the remains, stating that:

I understand that the remains is nothing that can be in the world, nothing that remains as an entity [*étant*]. It is the being [*être*], rather, that there is – this is a name of the being that there is there but which, giving itself (*es gibt ashes*), is nothing remains beyond everything that is (*konis epekeina tes ousias*), *remains unpronounceable in order to make saying possible although it is nothing* (Derrida 1991, 72 my emphasis).

The remains, then, expresses this undecidable between being and non-being; it is not there, yet ‘being without presence has not been... where there is cinder’ (Derrida 1991, 38). Yet it is this term, the remains or the cinder, that Derrida sees as ensuring the very possibility of saying anything. To explore the *remains* further and to better understand how Derrida uses it in his work, in the following four chapters this thesis will explore the similarities and differences between the *remains* and Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals, in addition to how they link and assist one another in a deconstructive reading.

Before moving on, it is important to note how throughout this section there are two ways in which Derrida uses the term remains. On the one hand, it can be seen that Derrida is speaking of the notion of the remains as not existing as a material or present object, as a non-being, yet on the other hand he establishes that it has effects which can be seen as so, as physical marks (2005, 152). In order to make this clearer throughout the rest of this thesis, I distinguish between the two different occurrences of the remains. First, I use the term *remains*, which I will keep italicised throughout this thesis, to refer to the Derrida’s quasi-transcendental of the remains; that is, the thing which is not present yet is linked to other quasi-transcendentals such as survivability and iterability. Second, what Derrida terms ‘remainder effects’, that is the part of the *remains* that allows us to understand there is such a thing as the *remains*, I will term ‘remainder’.

This use of the word remainder serves two functions. First, it allows for a more physical conceptualisation of that which is left behind, an understanding that will be explored further in chapter six in regards to translation. While secondly, it carries within

itself notions of both the singular and the plural, as in the remainder could be a single thing or multiple: one can speak of the remainder of a flock to refer to either many sheep or just one. The remainder carries connotations of not being able to exhaust all the possible remainders that there could be, that there is always more that can be left behind as indeed it means that there is always more to come. This is due to the relation between the sign and the *remains* at the moment of interpretation, which will be explored in greater detail in the next four chapters. The use of the term remainder reveals that there is an unfathomable multiplicity which is always more or less than one thinks, due to the nature of the *remains*, yet still is seen as influencing or impacting on the interpretation. However, before exploring the importance of the *remains* to translation, it is important to further explore how the *remains* relates to some of Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals, such as the trace and iterability.

Chapter 3 – Between Presence and Absence: The *Remains*, ‘the trace’ and iterability

The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting those structures. Inhabiting them *in a certain way*, because one always inhabits, and all the more when one does not suspect it, operating necessarily from the inside, borrowing all the strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure, borrowing them structurally, that is to say without being able to isolate their elements and atoms, the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work (Derrida 1997, 24)

The previous chapter examined Jacques Derrida’s quasi-transcendental of the *remains*, in particular, the way it disrupts both presence and absence. Before developing upon this further, that I may be able to ultimately theorise a new way of understanding deconstruction and translation in relation to ethics, a deeper understanding of the *remains*, and how it relates to deconstruction is required. In order to facilitate this understanding, this and the following chapter will investigate the extent to which the *remains* is not independent or separate from Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals. Indeed, as I will argue, not only is the *remains* an important component of deconstruction, Derrida’s deconstruction significantly touches upon the notion of the *remains*, even when not explicitly named as such. Exploring this, these two chapters engage with several of Derrida’s texts in which he reads and engages with the work of theorists such as Blanchot, Benjamin, and Austin. The aim of the process undertaken throughout the following chapters is important as it allows for a clearer understanding of the relationship between the *remains* and Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals in order that the similarities and differences among them are clear. Once these similarities and differences are brought to light and explored, this thesis will then be able to demonstrate the manner in which the *remains* relates to deconstruction and how this adds to the deconstruction of Western translation theories explored previously.

It is pertinent to note that in the epigraph above, Derrida describes a kind of movement to deconstruction, one that begins inside the system or logic itself. As explained in the introduction, these chapters follow this thought in that they begin by identifying how the *remains* occupies a position inside a binary before developing upon how this understanding. In so doing, my conceptualisation of the *remains* in terms of movements

should not be understood in a temporal or spatial sense. While what I define as remainder effects exist as the product of spatio-temporal conditions, through the unique context of each reading or translation, the *remains*, like Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals, is not restricted in this manner. As argued in the opening chapter, the use of the term 'quasi-transcendental' by commentators such as Geoffrey Bennington (1999) to describe the terms used in deconstruction means that the *remains* must also be understood as existing outside any specific spatio-temporal condition. Rather than conveying physical or temporal movement, I define the deconstructive process as movements in order to allow for greater clarity in my understanding. By identifying the movements common across much of Derrida's work, my argument can then trace and follow how Derrida uses quasi-transcendentals to explore the limits and assumptions of logocentrism throughout his work. This use is consistent with how Derrida describes his deconstruction project, as evident in the epigraph, when he argues that the 'movement' of deconstruction is internal to the sign or logic of the text itself. This is the foundation of this chapter, that deconstruction begins not from outside the sign, rather from inside it. While there are numerous terms and works by Derrida that could be examined in regards to the *remains*, I will focus on those I identify as most pertinent to the issue of the *remains* and also translation, beginning with *différance* and iterability.

As I remarked in the introduction, deconstruction does not function in isolation from either the text or context, nor indeed from other quasi-transcendentals that are part of deconstruction. Thus, any examination of the *remains* that did not consider it in light of other significant concepts would overlook much of the importance of the *remains* itself. Indeed, I argue that in exploring and considering the *remains* in light of Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals our understanding will be deepened and the importance of it to translation will be revealed. To begin, this chapter will first turn to *différance*.

Différance

Both *différance* and 'the trace' are important to the *remains* for two reasons. First, *différance* is crucial to the work of deconstruction in the logocentrism that translation is built upon, as demonstrated in the first chapter. Second, the *remains* can be understood itself as a trace, as I will go on to argue. As discussed previously, *différance* deconstructs the logocentrism that assumes the primacy of speech over writing. Derrida uses *différance* to question the privileging of speech over writing, developing Ferdinand de Saussure's

argument of the arbitrariness by extending it to be true to all signs, phonetic signs included (Derrida 1986b, 12). Specifically, Derrida outlines this argument through his investigation of the two binaries that *différance* deconstructs. First, between phonetic and written language. As the ‘a’ of *différance* is inaudible, there should not be a phonetic distinction between *différance* and difference, only a visible mark of differentiation.

The inaudible difference in the sign leads Derrida to conclude that there is no purely phonetic writing. Not only are phonetic signs incapable of adequately expressing all differences, they also need to incorporate non-phonetic signs in order to be grammatically accurate. This necessity for non-phonetic signs is why phonetic signs are unable to escape silent differences, such as those caused through the effects of punctuation. Derrida concludes that if ‘there is no purely phonetic writing, it is that there is no purely phonetic *phôné*. The difference which establishes phonemes and lets them be heard remains in and of itself inaudible, in every sense of the word’ (*ibid*, 5). In this quote, Derrida briefly touches upon the resistance the *remains* places between the sign and the reading, which is one of the key attributes of the *remains* as both/and, as I will demonstrate throughout this chapter. The difference that Derrida writes of is both present in the sign yet unable to be completely expressed in the sign. As such, it is not a full presence as it cannot be clearly defined. It is this confluence between both presence and absence in *différance* that reveals its importance to an understanding of the *remains*. *Différance*, like the *remains*, occupies a both/and as it exists in-between phonetic and written signs. While it can be expressed orally or graphically, it contains an alphabetic difference in the ‘a’. As such, it is not limited to either mode of expression as it is between and belongs to both.

The second binary occurs between differing and deferral, which co-exist at the heart of *différance*, as the root verb of *différance*, *différer*, has two distinct meanings. The first is to not be identical, to be different or discernable from something else, similar to Saussure’s argument of the meaning of the sign as based on arbitrary difference (Saussure 1983, 166). The second meaning, however, is of temporisation, which Derrida describes as a detour or suspension of accomplishment or desire, which manifests as a deferral of meaning of the sign (Derrida 1986b, 8). As explained in the opening chapter, *différance* deconstructs the metaphysics of presence by questioning the understanding of meaning as being present in the sign. As opposed to this metaphysics of presence, *différance* reveals that meaning is perpetually deferred onto other signs, whether those present or absent, as well as onto other potential contexts in which the sign can be received. It is not possible,

however, to define *différance* as either difference or temporal deferral, rather it expresses *both at the same time*. Derrida notes that ‘*différance* can refer simultaneously to the entire configuration of its meanings. It is immediately and irreducibly polysemic’ (*ibid*, 8). Alan Bass explains in a note in his translation of Derrida’s essay that ‘*différance* suspends itself between the two senses of *différant* – differing, deferring. We might say it defers differing, and differs from deferring, in and of itself’ (Bass in Derrida 1986b, 8 tn.10). *Différance* disrupts attempts to define it as one meaning at the very moment simply it disrupts the possibility of a sign having a discrete or stable meaning. The manner of this disruption, both the tension between presence and absence and the temporality of this disruption through the deferral of meaning, shares many similarities with the tension of the *remains*.

One of the most pivotal connections between *différance* and the *remains* is evident through the manner in which *différance* connects with Derrida’s understanding of the trace, as defined in the opening chapter. Both the differing between signs and the deferral of meaning onto other signs tie in with Derrida’s use of the trace, as all signs bear in them the trace of other signs. *Différance* relates to the trace, as it is through the trace between signs that the deferral and differing can be realised. Derrida introduces this connection between the trace and the cinder, which I understand as the *remains* through the definitions explored in the previous chapter, when he writes: ‘The thought of the trace... is a thought about cinders’ (Derrida 1992, 211). This thought about cinders is one that runs throughout all of Derrida’s texts (Derrida 1992, 211), in the same manner in which the trace and *différance* are continually at play throughout deconstruction. It is important to note, however, that the *remains* is not synonymous with the trace, as there are subtle yet distinct differences. Like the *remains*, the trace is marked by a certain temporality and physicality. It is the differing and deferral of *différance* that leads to the working of the trace, through the physical difference of the signs that creates the very possibility of meaning and the deferral of this meaning onto other signs. It is possible to take this similarity (the *remains* also has the physicality of the remainder effects with an element of temporality, as will be discussed below) and the quote from Derrida cited above as meaning that the cinder is another word for the movement of the trace. Robert Eaglestone develops this argument of the cinder as a temporal trace when he writes: ‘The cinder is temporal: that particular fire and that particular burnt “thing” can never be recreated, brought back, brought to life. The cinder brings the trace into temporality: and into a specific temporality... We live in a particular time, we reflect particular moments’ (Eaglestone 2002, 32). Eaglestone continues,

commenting that the trace is best considered as the cinder. It is important to note, that the temporality that Eaglestone writes of here is one in which the translator themselves changes between contexts. Echoing the passage from Derrida, cited in the previous chapter, in which Derrida refers to the author of his works as someone other than himself, Eaglestone refers to the temporal nature of ourselves as readers and translators, as well as that of the sign.

However, any understanding of the trace and the cinder as identical is problematic, however, as it fails to account for the difference in temporality between the two. I must be clear that I am not suggesting that Eaglestone is ignorant of this difference, as will be explained shortly. The *remains* calls forth a different kind of temporality to the deferral of différance and the trace. As opposed to an argument that reduces the *remains* as merely an aspect of the trace, I instead argue that the *remains* as presented by Derrida, specifically in *Cinders*, is similar to yet distinct from how he writes of the trace in texts such as *Of Grammatology* (1997) and ‘Différance’ in *Margins of Philosophy* (1986b). Eaglestone’s summation of the cinder as the trace is a continuation of an argument that is expressed by Derrida in *Cinders* (1991, 43). However, just above this passage, Derrida writes: ‘At present, here and now, there is something material – visible but scarcely readable – that, referring only to itself, no longer makes a trace, unless it traces only by losing the trace it scarcely leaves/ - that it just barely remains’ (*ibid*, 43). *Referring only to itself*, rather to another sign, is the key difference between the trace and the *remains*. The differing of différance occurs through the comparison between signs; there can only be differing if a sign refers to other signs in order to differentiate itself from others, thus demarcating the meaning it seeks to express. This requirement of comparison is also evident in the act of deferral, as meaning is deferred through the relationship that exists between signs through the system of language. Thus, the trace is a physical and temporal relation between signs as they refer to one another. The *remains*, however, refers only to itself; it is a temporal relation between a sign and the very same sign in different contexts. This is supported by the quote from Eaglestone, cited above, in which he argues that the cinder is the specific temporality of a particular time and the manner in which the sign is received at that very moment. This is why I argue that the *remains* should not be equated to the trace or thought of as another way of describing the movement of the trace, despite their similarities. While they are linked, they reveal different aspects of temporality at play in the sign; the trace of the cinder is different from the trace of différance.

The *remains* is to be understood as existing between different temporal moments, as it can only refer back to itself in the sense of the previous form before the fire or into the future through the understanding of the necessary survival of the sign. This confluence of past and future is explained by Dorota Glowacka when she writes of the name of the object or event as ‘never empty (though it is never full either). Carrying the past, the word is also turned toward the future, as testimony to that which is yet-to-arrive into being-named’ (Glowacka 2007, 133). In describing the name in this way, Glowacka presents an argument much like the understanding of the *remains* as mourning explored previously, through the use of testimony. However, Glowacka extends this testimony into a future that has yet to arrive, in the form of a testimony to come. The *remains* is intrinsically linked to notions of mourning, as it stands for something that has passed, whether it is for the corpse, corpus or cinder. This mourning is evident in the title of *Cinders* (1991), as Lukacher notes in his introduction:

The title *Feu la cendre* indicates, by virtue of its double displacement of the two meanings of feu, yet a further connection - to mourning: “fire,” but also “deceased” or “departed.” Among the options for a more literal translation are “Fire, Cinder,” “Burn the Cinder,” or “The Late Cinder,” “The Bereaved Cinder,” in the archaic sense of “bereaved” as “separated” or “taken away.” (Lukacher in Derrida 1991, 11).

Thus, the cinder marks the site of what was taken away; it is the site at which one can mourn. This definition of the cinder is reminiscent of the way Geoffrey Bennington describes Derrida’s use of ‘*demi-deuil*’ or half mourning, in that as long as the *remains* acts as a site of mourning, it disrupts or prohibits one from developing through the mourning process (Bennington 2010, xii). As the previous chapter explained, half-mourning is evident in the *remains* as cinder, as it is a present mark of what is no longer present but not yet absent. The relation to mourning and the connection between future and past in the sign reveals that the *remains* is at play in the binary between presence and absence. The deconstruction of the binary of presence and absence through the *remains* and mourning is also evident when David Michael Levin writes that: ‘Mourning is a making-present and therefore a denial of death, and also, at the same time, a letting-go, a letting-die, an acceptance of death’ (Levin 2003, 287). The *remains* exists between this making-presence and this letting-die, between this absence and presence, as it exists as a site of mourning for something that has passed, yet what it marks the site of can never be present. The *remains* is both the site for mourning what was while simultaneously allowing for what has

passed to live on in the act of remembering; as such it can be seen as being between two terms, between the past and future of the sign. It is this ability to express the past and future simultaneously that Herman Rapaport focuses on when he argues that the survival is linked to the notion of the cinder and the *remains* (Rapaport 1994, 230), with the cinder surviving as the remainder of language (Rapaport 2003, 91). However, it must be noted that what survives as *remains* is not present as such; it is not an object that can be apprehended. This survivability will be explored further in the following chapter, but before turning to this I will first examine the links between the *remains* and iterability.

Iterability

The understanding of the *remains* as a trace, specifically a trace between the sign and the self-same sign, is similar to Derrida's use of iterability. As the opening chapter touched upon, iterability reveals the play of meaning of the sign due to changing contexts. As such, the *remains* appears to be similar to iterability in that both terms reveal the difference between the sign and the self-same sign due to the context in which they are received. However, as I will argue throughout the remainder of this chapter, there are fundamental differences between the two, namely through the tension between presence and absence through the *remains*. To demonstrate these differences (and thus the importance of the *remains*), it is necessary to further examine how Derrida conceives of iterability and how it challenges J. L. Austin's understanding of language and performatives.

As with *différance*, iterability begins by identifying a both/and or in-between position of a binary. However, as I will go on to demonstrate, iterability also deconstructs attempts to marginalise a kind of language use. This is evident in Derrida's reading of Austin, where he focuses on Austin's division of language into what he terms 'performatives' (Austin 1976, 4) and 'parasitic' (*ibid*, 22) uses of language. Austin's division of language into these two parts forms a binary as it places language that performs to achieve a meaning as separate from instances of language where it is not performing, or not functioning (which are understood as language acts that use the same words but without achieving the meaning). This binary is of particular importance, as it creates a position in which the one term can only define itself through what it seeks to set itself apart from or in opposition to. That is to say, we can only understand language that performs when also considering the times in which it would be understood or argued of as not performing. While deconstructing this binary is similar to that explored in the opening chapter, through

the examination of the supplement and origin, the importance of this division will be made evident in the following chapter, in which I discuss the concept of survivability in translation.

Returning to Austin, it is important to examine the grounds for his division in language before turning to Derrida's reading of Austin where he outlines and identifies the impact of the iterability of the sign. Austin describes performatives as a type of language that does not describe something outside of language and, therefore, cannot be judged by distinctions such as true or false. Rather performatives do something in language (Austin 1976, 5); that is to say, they achieve something through or in language (Glendenning 2000, 320). Austin argues that speech acts and performances are different to other acts of language, as they do not refer to objects outside of language; they do not have a referent. Rather, he postulates that speech acts must have, as their internal structure, the ability and necessity to effect and transform something, whether legally or culturally. Austin defines these utterances in order to separate them from the general category of 'statements', writing:

Utterances can be found, satisfying these conditions, yet such that

- A. they do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and
- B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not normally be described as, or as 'just', saying something (Austin 1976, 5).

These categories that Austin uses to define 'utterances' evoke extra-linguistic conditions as they are reliant on rules which can only be judged outside of language; rules that are judged by the context within which the utterances are made as much as the words themselves. The importance of this reliance on the extra-linguistic conditions and use of context will be further explored shortly.

Focusing on Austin's definition of utterances, the extra-linguistic conditions are evident in Austin's example of weddings. In a wedding the vows exchanged function in a specific manner and in a specific context that allows them to have a legal meaning exclusive to those words alone. The utterances used in a wedding ceremony do not describe an object or concept, nor do they fall under the categories of true or false. Instead these terms perform an action; they are involved in the action rather than reporting on the language or objects.

These performatives are entirely reliant on a saturated and well-defined context, in that they can only be understood as working or being 'happy' if a number of rules are met (Austin 1976, 14-17). The initial pair of rules requires that a convention that can be enacted with the utterances and that the persons involved are appropriate to enact the utterance. The next pair of rules states that the participants must complete the procedure correctly. For example, some certain words or phrases need to be used for the wedding to function as a wedding and be legally binding. Finally, Austin writes that the procedure requires that the people participating have certain thoughts or intentions and that they then act accordingly. For example, if the wedding was performed as part of a play it would not be legally binding even if one of the actors was endowed with the legal powers to perform a wedding as the intention behind the words was not to get married (*ibid*, 14-15).

Before exploring the ramifications of these extra-linguistic rules and conditions, it is important to outline the other part of the binary created by performatives and how it is used in Derrida's reading of Austin. In postulating the existence of pure performatives, Austin necessarily implies the existence of types of language that do not do anything in language, as those that performatives are distinguished against, which are then marginalised as lesser. Austin describes these as 'parasitic' language or utterances, which he defines as instances in which the performatives are used in a context that is not the intended one. Austin treats this possibility of the negative, the 'unhappy' performatives, as an unfortunate accident. For Derrida, however, it represents more than this as there is always a possibility of the performative misfiring. As such, these misfires are a necessary law (Derrida 1998, 15), as will be argued shortly. Austin, however, attempts to exclude these accidents that render performatives void, arguing:

...a performative utterance will, for example, be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor in the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy... Language in such circumstances is in special ways – intelligibly – used not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use – ways which fall under the doctrine of the *etiolations* of language (Austin 1976, 22).

It is pertinent to note how the language used by Austin in describing these examples creates a hierarchical binary. This hierarchy ultimately falls back upon the logocentrism explored in the opening chapter since it describes parasitic uses as hollow, implying a presence of meaning in performatives. Despite Austin stating his intention to ignore these examples of language, there is an unavoidable link in his work between performative and parasitic

language acts. Indeed, the only difference between a successful performative and a parasitic one comes not from the language or sign itself, indeed Austin defines parasitic language as performatives that have been misused, but rather from the context and intention of the speaker or author. Austin writes that parasitic use of language is one in which a performative is used '*in a peculiar way*' (Austin 1976, 22); thus, the difference between the performative and the parasitic act comes from an external judgement over how the performative is used. I use the term external as the criteria through which the judgment is made consists of the context in which the sign is used, which is to say that there is nothing in the sign itself that defines it as parasitic or a performative as such. Relying on context in this manner, the binary for Austin becomes one of serious/non-serious speech acts, where the parasitic comes from a knowing misuse of the performative (Llewelyn 1986, 61).

Now that the differences Austin ascribes between performatives and parasitic uses of language are clear, it is possible to examine the role of context further. The manner in which Austin and, later, John Searle in his response to Derrida, distinguish whether the performatives are serious or not is through an appeal to context, specifically a context that is understood as determinable (Colebrook and McHoul 1996, 432). The division between performatives and parasitic uses of language relies on a distinction made upon the intended meaning or use of the speech act, which, in turn, belies a context that is capable of being completely understood or saturated. For Austin, any acts of language deemed to be parasitic from their conventional or intended use are those that subvert a correct reading, 'mis-readings', and must be guilty of ignoring the context in which the language is used (Colebrook and McHoul 1996, 432). The gap between the 'correct' reading and the 'mis-reading' is where the marginalisation occurs in Austin's account of language, as he seeks to exclude these accidents, that which he sees as rendering performatives speech acts void. Austin notes that while 'some high-level doctrines might embrace both what we have called infelicities *and* these other "unhappy" features' (Austin 1976, 21), he does not include 'unhappy features' in his analysis of language, adding that features 'of this sort would normally come under the heading of "extenuating circumstances"' (*ibid* 21). However, Derrida critiques this, explaining that the way a text performs in one context does not make that context or the meaning produced better or more correct than the way it could be read in other contexts.

This is not to suggest that Derrida practices 'performance interpretation', which would suggest that all signs can mean everything, and thus, every sign is essentially

meaningless. Claire Colebrook and Alec McHoul note that Derrida has been attacked for this reading of Austin, with some theorists suggesting that Derrida's theory is thus indeterminist or nihilist (Colebrook and McHoul 1996, 434). Rather than indeterminable, Colebrook and McHoul (*ibid*, 437) note that Derrida sees the context as determinate, in that the context determines the meaning ascribed to the sign, yet the context itself is undecidable. The ramifications of this will be explored in the following chapter with the concept of survival. However, it is important to note that I am not suggesting that Derrida's understanding of context is nihilistic, as I have argued against this previously. Nicole Anderson puts forward a compelling argument against any position that understands deconstruction as nihilist or 'a licence for "textual freeplay"', explaining that these criticisms: 'ignore the paradox of *différance*. Precisely because of the dilemmas and questions raised by this paradox, *différance* allows for, and opens, the possibility of an ethics that is other than but also normative' (Anderson 2012, 73). As opposed to disrupting any ethical understanding, the tension between determinacy and indeterminacy, as with the tension between all binaries, creates the possibility of an ethical relation to that which is other as well as that which is the same. This argument will be explored further in the final part of this thesis. Rather than marginalising authorial intention or the concept of an intended context, Derrida instead seeks to explore and call into question the very movement of marginalisation entirely by questioning the logic that any privileging is based upon.

In excluding 'accidental misfires' or 'abuses,' Austin excludes a plethora of possible outcomes of every speech act, as Derrida explains:

It [Austin's procedure] consists in recognising that the possibility of the negative is in fact a structural possibility, that failure is an essential risk of the operations under consideration; then, in a move which is almost *immediately simultaneous*, in the name of a kind of ideal regulation, it excludes that risk as accidental, exterior, one which teaches us nothing about the linguistic phenomena being considered (Derrida 1998, 15).

Despite acknowledging the existence of these potential miscommunications (Austin 1976, 18-19), Austin excludes them from his analysis of language (*ibid*, 21). Jonathan Culler argues that while Austin criticises other language theoreticians for excluding parts of language from their analysis, he is guilty of doing the same in his exclusion of these other contexts (Culler 1981, 20). I agree with Culler on this point, as this attempt to exclude the potential for miscommunication, or to focus only on the times in which language is deemed to work, is to ignore the role of context. It is this exclusion of that which is 'accidental' or

‘exterior’ that Derrida focuses on in Austin’s work, specifically this appeal to a correct or preferable context at the expense of other contexts that would seek to reinterpret the sign.

Returning to Austin’s wedding example, there is a desire to exclude aspects of types of language that Austin identifies as peripheral to his theory of language. To support this exclusion, he falls back upon an understanding of intention to categorise and define aspects of language in a way that a binary is created between types of language that have this intention present and those that do not. This is why performatives and parasitic uses of language are determined by external conditions, namely the context and extra-linguistic rules that are applied to the signs themselves. When Austin argues that what makes a promise a promise is both the intention of the speaker as well as the conventional rules that manifest through the context he relies on both these intentions and contexts as being in someway present or comprehensible to any one who encounters the signs, leading Ian Maclachlan to conclude that: ‘These conventional rules mean necessarily... that an utterance must be able to be used to tell a lie if it can be used to tell the truth (or if sincerity is to be distinguished from insincerity), then an extralinguistic criterion needs to be found’ (Maclachlan 2004, 51). It is this extra-linguistic criterion that Austin appeals to in order to judge the validity of the speech act. Indeed, this judgement itself is crucial for Austin as there needs to be the possibility for both success and failure. Jonathan Culler argues that ‘Austin thus does not treat failure as an external accident that befalls performatives and has no bearing on their nature. The possibility of failure is internal to the performance and a point of departure for its investigation. Something cannot be a performative unless it can go wrong’ (Culler 1981, 18). It is not that Austin excludes the possibility of the performative failing, for, as noted earlier, the chance of failure and parasitic uses are key parts of Austin’s definition of performatives. However, while he acknowledges their possibility, Austin seeks to exclude them from his analysis as not serious or worthy for consideration. In doing so he marginalises these accidental moments against performative acts, which he then associates with a complete presence of both intention and determinable context. Derrida takes exception here on how Austin treats this possibility of the negative as an unfortunate possibility.

Derrida solicits this extra-linguistic requirement through what he terms iterability, which develops from a combination of the Sanskrit words *iter*, ‘again’, and *itara* or ‘other’ (Wortham 2010, 78); thus, iterability combines the alterity of the Other with repetition (Derrida 1998, 7). Iterability deconstructs the possibility of intention and of a determinable

context, due to citation and repetition. To explain this further, the sign demands repetition as we can only recognise it as a sign, as a mark that stands for a particular meaning, if we have encountered the sign before. Yet iterability implies more than just simple or pure repetition. Containing the alterity of the Other, the repeated sign is not identical to previous instances of the sign, rather, with each repetition there is difference. This difference develops due to the manner in which a sign is not restrained to the context in which it is used at any given time; there will always be other possible contexts in which it can be used. Austin himself cannot escape this argument in his own reasoning. In distinguishing between performatives and parasitic uses Austin relies on a distinction between the two instances of the sign that can only come about due to the differences in how the sign is used, difference despite repetition. However, despite this reliance on repetition, Austin's theory of language seeks to ignore or marginalise one of the necessary functions of the sign, its ability to escape the intended context through repetition.

Derrida outlines the significance of iterability in regards to the sign when he argues that a sign must be able to function in the absence of both the sender and the receiver, which is to say that it needs to be capable of being understood even if the author or the intended receiver were absent (1998, 5). Signs can be understood because they have been encountered before, they are only understandable insofar as we recognise them. In calling into question Austin's understanding of the intention of the speaker and the role of context, Derrida focuses on what writing can achieve that has been ignored in the traditional understanding of speech and writing; namely, the way in which it continues to communicate and function as a sign and how this can be extended to all signs. The key to exploring this process of marginalisation is the manner in which it is impossible to completely saturate a context. According to Derrida, this occurs due to two key possible absences. First, there is the absence of a determined receiver, the intended recipient who will receive the communication at a later date. As Mark Dooley and Liam Kavanagh note, a letter would still function and continue to be legible even if the intended recipient passed away (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 37). Derrida explains:

In order for my 'written communication' to retain its function as writing, i.e., its readability, it must remain readable despite the absolute disappearance of any receiver, determined in general. My communication must be repeatable – iterable – in the absolute absence of the receiver or of any empirically determinable collectivity of receivers (Derrida 1998, 7).

Derrida describes this as an absent presence, as there is still the understanding that the receiver is to be present at some stage; he or she is just not present at that specific moment. Moreover, Derrida extends this to what he explains of as a radical and complete absence, in the sense that there might never be a receiver. For Derrida, writing must be able to function in the absence of any and all readers.

This iterable nature of the sign as able to function in the absence of the receiver reveals the second possible absence. Writing can and, indeed, must, be able to function in the radical absence of the sender. Writing must continue to ‘act’ and be readable beyond the absence of the author. This second absence is similar to the first in that writing can function in the absence of sender and receiver due to the recipient’s ability to read or interpret the sign in a different context to the very context the sign was originally enclosed in; to cite and recite the sign in new ways independent of the original author-scripter’s intent. Derrida writes:

by virtue of its essential iterability, the written syntagma can always be detached from the chain in which it is inserted or given without causing it to lose all possibility of functioning, if not all possibility of ‘communicating’ precisely. One can perhaps come to recognise other possibilities by inscribing it or *grafting* it onto other chains (Derrida 1988, 9).

Several consequences develop in light of this ability of the sign to be reinscribed or grafted into other chains of signs. First, it reinforces Derrida’s argument that there is no meaning present in the sign itself; rather, the meaning is tied to the context of the reading. This is evident in Austin’s example of a wedding cited earlier. The meaning of the ceremony that creates the rules and conditions in which the wedding is deemed to be official comes not from the words themselves, as Austin notes that the wedding is not official if performed as part of a play; rather, the ceremony is official due to context in which the words are uttered. Second, as a consequence of this, there is a permanent possibility to interpret the sign out of the original or intended context, a move that Austin defines as parasitic. While Austin acknowledges the possibility of the sign being used in other contexts through his understanding of a ‘mis-reading’, as explained earlier, he fails to take into account that the signs will, at some stage, be received or read in a context that changes the meaning to the extent it no longer resembles the meaning from the earlier context. That is to say, the essential iterability of the sign allows it to be placed into contexts that fall outside of the performative/misfire dichotomy.

This capacity to function in light of absence also empowers the sign to be cited and repeated in new and differing contexts. Derrida explains the significance of this, arguing that:

As far as the internal semiotic context is concerned, the force of the rupture is no less important: by virtue of its essential iterability, a written syntagma can always be detached from the chain in which it is inserted or given without causing it to lose all possibility of functioning, if not all possibility of “communicating,” precisely. One can perhaps come to recognize other possibilities in it by inscribing it or grafting it onto other chains. No context can entirely enclose it. Nor any code, the code here being both the possibility and impossibility of writing, of its essential iterability (repetition/alterity) (Derrida 1998, 9).

There are numerous issues that Derrida raises in this passage. For instance, that no context can completely enclose a sign and the role of citation as allowing for the sign to be grafted on to any chain of signifiers. The crux of this passage, however, is the way in which iterability is understood as existing between both sides of the binaries, such as that between possibility and impossibility, as well as between performatives and parasitic uses of language. As iterability contains the possibility that one can break the sign from its original context, the manner in which Austin and Searle defined the difference between a serious and non-serious language act becomes problematic. As Colebrook and McHoul explain, while meaning is determined to an extent by the context the sign is in, this context is always opened through citation and iterability (Colebrook and McHoul 1996, 437).

Iterability is particularly important for translation, especially in regard to the role of the recorded sign or mark. While this was explored in the first chapter, in the section that explored phonocentrism, it is important to briefly touch upon it again in order that the importance of iterability to context, as well as the importance of iterability to the *remains*, is clear. In particular, this importance is evident in issues of misunderstanding and citationality. Bennington (1993, 45) explains that the written signifier carries within it more risk of misunderstanding, due to writing’s extended area of effectiveness of communication, extended insofar as it can continue to communicate beyond the initial act of writing. He argues that: ‘Writing communicates my thought to far distances, during my absence, even after my death’ (*ibid*, 50). It is important to expand upon this quote from Bennington, as I would argue that it is not that writing does communicate over far distances, as this is not always the case. Rather, it is always a possibility that it will be communicated

over both physical and temporal distances. This is what Colebrook and McHoul were referring to when they wrote of the opening of context; that is to say, the inability to limit the context of the sign. In talking of the absence of the author, even after death, Bennington also falls back upon a core theme of the *remains*, as covered in the second chapter, of the *remains* as corpus and inheritance.

Writing has the ability to communicate and be understood over temporal and spatial distances in spite of absence, in particular, the absence of sender and receiver. The written mark can survive beyond the death of the sender and thus can operate and be read independently of his or her intentions. This is in apparent opposition to an understanding of speech, which, notwithstanding the possibility of recording or transcribing, is associated with the presence of both speaker and listener. However, the possibility of recording speech had been accepted long before orators such as Cicero practiced translating famous Greek texts (Robinson 2002, 4). This transcription after the fact is part of the reason why writing was deemed to be secondary in nature to speech. However, the ease through which the spoken sign can take up the written form, coupled with the possibility now for both mechanical and digital recordings of the voice, reveal that the possibility of absence is not unique to writing alone, as the absence in the structure of writing is also true ‘of all language in general’ (Derrida 1998, 5).

Writing is by no means the only form of communication that is linked with representation or the only form one can use to quote. However, Bennington explains a supposed danger or risk when he explains: ‘Once more, it is writing which best illustrates this general property of language: writing is by definition destined to be read in a context different from that of the act of inscription’ (Bennington 2003, 85-86). Crucial to Bennington’s position is not that the graphic sign is destined to be read in a different context, rather it is the innate possibility that the sign can be read in a context and in such a way as to produce meanings of which the author is not even aware. However, any sign that is capable of being repeated is open to this possibility of different contexts, even phonetic signs. By demonstrating that the problems associated with writing are true of all language acts, including speech acts, Derrida argues that the supposed accidental misreadings come from a problem of context that affects language at all levels. This, in turn, critically impacts the presence associated with speech. As opposed to the assumed presence of the speaker, the spoken or phonetic sign can still function in their absence, and thus, the presence of intention is undermined.

Derrida's use of iterability to question Austin's theory of language comes from the absences that operate around and in the sign. Derrida moves from the initial absences of sender and receiver, to absences that are evident in the kind of statements and language acts Austin focuses on in particular. First, the absence of the referent, which is evident in that when making a statement on an object or concept, the object or concept described does not need to be present and witnessed by either the sender or receiver. Removed from a transcendental signified and determined referent, all signs or marks are capable of being cited and repeated into a new context; there is always the possibility of citationality. Derrida writes:

Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written, in a small or large unit, can be *cited*, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable. This does not imply that the mark is invalid outside of a context, but on the contrary that there are only contexts without any centre or absolute anchorage (Derrida 1998, 12).

These absences are why, for Derrida, we cannot recollect the intentions of the author in the way that Austin and Searle wish. This is not a nihilistic move, as Dooley and Kavanagh note that it is such an impossibility that allows for all forms of 'meaningful communication' (2007, 36).

At this juncture, we can begin to understand how iterability and citation ultimately fall back upon and deconstruct the notions of presence and absence assumed by intention and context. An appeal to intention or to a specific context that would allow language to be judged as performing or pure is an appeal to presence, an appeal to something present that leads to the judgement being determined as successful. The accidents or examples of language that fall outside of their privileged uses are excluded on the basis of absence; the absence of intention in speech acts, the absence of meaning in indication, the absence of the correct language in pure language. This is why I argue that the marginalisation of language types explored at the start of the chapter all fall back upon a foundational logocentric understanding that marginalises absence for presence. This logocentric argument also seeks to exclude any remainder, any language that falls outside of the valued acts; it seeks to exclude the *remains*. Yet the *remains* exists in-between presence and absence, as shown in the definitions discussed in the previous chapter. As such, like iterability, the *remains* disrupts this marginalisation. As stated earlier, this similarity is not an argument that seeks to portray iterability and the *remains* as the same. The difference

between the two develops from the connection between the *remains* and both mourning and survival. This connection is of great importance to the issues of memory and translation that I will discuss later in this thesis. However, in order to understand both how and the extent to which this disruption occurs, this chapter will return to Derrida's use of iterability in his reading of Austin.

Derrida sets up his examination into the role of context from the outset of *Limited Inc.* (1998). In particular, he questions whether the word 'communication' has a determinate content, a fixed or unified meaning. Realising that there are many ways in which the word 'communication' can be seen as operating, Derrida argues: 'It seems self-evident that the ambiguous field of the word "communication" can be massively reduced by the limits of what is called a *context*' (Derrida 1998, 2). Derrida suggests that one should create 'a differential typology of forms of iteration' (Derrida 1998, 18) in place of the opposition of citation or iteration to a non-repeatable sign or pure sign. This use of iterability removes the division of cited utterance to original utterances and, instead, creates a system where there are different types of marks or 'chains of iterable marks.' Introducing the potential for citation to all utterances leads to the intention that animates the utterance being divided from its content, by what Derrida understands as a cleft or 'dehiscence'. Thus, separated from the intention that is understood as animating the sign, the argument or judgement that seeks to define language acts becomes problematic. Hence, there is no longer a necessary division between 'non-serious' and 'ordinary' language. More importantly, this new understanding prohibits any possibility of a completely saturated context. Derrida explains that:

In order for a context to be exhaustively determinable, in the sense required by Austin, conscious intention would at the very least have to be totally present and immediately transparent to itself and to others, since it is a determining centre of context. The concept of – or the search for – the context thus seems to suffer at this point from the same theoretical and 'interested' uncertainty as the concept of the 'ordinary,' from the same metaphysical origins: the ethical and teleological discourse of consciousness (Derrida 1998, 18).

In this passage, Derrida outlines his position in the debate, arguing that there is no way of determining all the conditions of and completely saturating any context. This argues against the possibility of a complete presence of either intention or 'correct' contexts, instead revealing the necessary possible absence of both. The key in the quote is how Derrida

argues against the concept of something being ‘determinable,’ in particular, the way Derrida writes of a determinable context as that which is used to determine the meaning of the utterance.

Christopher Norris explains Derrida’s position in regard to intention, stating that Derrida does not deny that one can use intention to interpret or understand utterances (1989, 179). Rather, in questioning the notion of a correct philosophy, Derrida is asserting that a theory of language and communication based on these notions of intention and convention is problematic, as Derrida ‘*is, most emphatically, denying the idea that philosophy can lay down the rules of this procedure by explaining how language should or must work if its workings are to make good sense*’ (Norris 1989, 179). In this, Norris is taking a similar position in his view of Derrida and intention to that covered earlier in regards to Colebrook and McHoul, and the determination of context. That is to say, Derrida does not deny that language can have a meaning or that communication can and does function; rather, he questions the stability or soundness of any argument or theory that takes this to be a universal truth. This is not to be taken as nihilistic, in that language can never function or is inherently unreliable, as much like how Dooley and Kavanagh reveal that the intention of the author is always, to some extent, unknowable or impossible to state for sure and this gives rise to a kind of ‘meaningful communication’, the inability to lock down how language should and must work allows for language to be repeatable and allows for its extension beyond the context in which it was originally uttered or conceived.

The inability to completely saturate a context comes from the ability to re-cite, as with every repetition there comes the possibility of the message being altered or transformed from the original intended meaning into another, different, meaning. Derrida explains:

...the remainder, which has nothing in common with ‘*scripta manent*,’ is bound up with the minimal possibility of the re-mark (see above) and with the structure of iterability. This iterability, as Sarl concedes, is indispensable to the functioning of all language, written or spoken (in the standard sense), and I would like to add, to that of every mark. Iterability supposes a minimal remainder (as well as a minimum of idealisation) in order that the identity of the *selfsame* be repeatable and identifiable *in, through*, and even *in view of* its alteration (Derrida 1998, 53).

It is here that the importance of *Limited Inc* to the *remains* is most evident, specifically through the connection between iterability and a remainder. There needs to be a remainder that is understood as such if the sign is to be conceived of as surviving beyond the context in which it is received. Thus, the *remains* allows for the sign to survive beyond the reading, much like the survivability of the text, explored later in this chapter through 'Living On/Borderlines.' What this quote from Derrida highlights is that as a consequence of the indeterminable nature of the text and context, every reading will have the possibility to alter and transform the intended meaning of the author, whether wilfully or not. This is not to advocate for a nihilistic understanding of reading or the sign, however, as will be explained in the following two chapters. Alteration, however, comes from the iteration of the text, as Derrida notes: 'Iteration alters, something new takes place' (Derrida 1998, 40). That there is the possibility that something new will take place is due to the absences explained earlier. However, the new iteration of the sign is not more or less absent than any other example of language.

John Searle and Austin require this absence to be specific to some examples of language rather than others through their focus on successful performatives as opposed to felicitous or unsuccessful performatives. Specifically, their understanding of speech acts requires presence in the form of an understanding of the speakers' mind and intention as well as an ability to perceive the future in order to be able to judge or evaluate how successful the performative was (Stocker 2006, 64). This develops as a consequence of Austin's focus on the singularity of the context, as this appeal to context is the basis as to whether the performative is adjudged to be functioning; each context must be understood as existing in a particular way that is unique to it. Bennington writes that Austin's position requires an understanding that 'a statement or a sentence is nonetheless a singular event which can precisely *not* be repeated, which takes place at a point in space-time whose coordinates (what is called the context) guarantee its singularity' (Bennington 1993, 87). Bennington continues, noting that, in exploring this argument, Derrida is not advocating the liberty of the reader to read the text out of context, an act that would be meaningless as the reader always finds themselves in a context; rather, Derrida is interrogating the way the concept or notion of context has been used (*ibid*, 85). This not only has the effect of marking the inadequacy of the term or concept of 'context,' it also has ramifications on the act of writing. Derrida states:

it [the non-saturation of any given context] would necessitate a certain generalisation and a certain displacement of the concept of writing. This concept would no longer be comprehensible in terms of communication, at least, in the limited sense of transmission of meaning. Inversely, it is within the general domain of writing, defined in this way, that the effects of semantic communication can be determined as effects that are particular, secondary, inscribed, and supplementary (Derrida 1998, 3).

When Derrida writes of the non-saturation of a context, he does so through engaging with the debate between speech and writing. As explored throughout the first chapter, Derrida argues that the derivative nature ascribed to writing is true of all signs, developing this through *différance* and ‘arche-writing’.

Iterability and the *Remains*

It is at this juncture that we can return to the key links between iterability and the *remains*. The ability to distinguish between the two examples presupposes an identity of the sign that can be recognised across its innumerable uses; the privileged must be recognised as such from the previous times it has been encountered. This argument thus falls back upon an understanding of permanence, as the privileged signs have permanence in their nature that allows for them to be read as such. While the marginalised example develops as a consequence of, or indeed in opposition to, the permanence of the privileged example, it is considered to be lacking something (the context or intention for example), which is why it is deemed to be parasitic or incomplete. However, as this chapter has shown, Derrida uses iterability to question the notion of the permanence of the sign. As it can be re-cited in future or other possible contexts, there must be a portion of the sign that exists as a remainder. Hence, as there is a remainder, it becomes problematic to speak of the complete presence of the sign, as there is a portion of it left as a remainder in its use. The *remains* is both absent from the reading, as it falls away from the attempted mastery of the interpretation yet is present as an aspect or potential of the sign.

The incompatibility of the remainder and the presence of meaning in the sign as permanence comes from the role of iterability in the creation of a *remains*, as Derrida argues that a sign must be able to function in the absence of the intended author and receiver. Moreover, the sign must be able to function in a new context in order to be understood as functioning as such. This working of the sign delimits the control of meaning the author has over the mark. Derrida explains: ‘Iterability alters, contaminating

parasitically what it identifies and enables to repeat ‘itself’; it leaves us no choice but to mean (to say) something that is (already, always, also) other than what we mean (to say)’ (Derrida 1998, 62). Meaning what one does not mean, receiving what one does not want to receive, the *remains* functions both through and because of iterability. Carrying within itself infinite possibilities and contexts, the sign can never be completely understood; aspects must always be seen as resisting, as a remainder. The remainder is why the sign can be understood in the first place, as it is this remainder that continues, that allows us to recognise the sign. Yet the *remains* also disrupts this presence through the remainder, as the intention that animates the sign and the context it is determined for are never present as the author wishes.

The remainder that allows language to function appears from the iterability of every text or mark, thus it is neither present nor absent. For Derrida, the remainder ‘is never that of a full or fulfilling presence: it is a differential structure escaping the logic of presence’ (Derrida 1998, 53). The *remains* do not guarantee the permanence of the text, though, despite an understanding of permanence guaranteeing the existence of the *remains*. For Derrida, the iterability that leads to the *remains* precludes any real stability of the sign, as this implies an unchangeable nature that is incompatible with the nature of iterability. Derrida explains: ‘...the structure of the remainder, implying alteration, renders all absolute permanence impossible. Ultimately, remaining and permanence are incompatible’ (Derrida 1998, 54). This incompatibility of the *remains* and permanence does not mean that the text itself can no longer be seen as permanent in a temporal sense. As the next chapter explains, an understanding of the sign as impermanent is the opposite of what Derrida intends, as the *remains* is actually what allows a text to be seen as living on or surviving. The concept of the *remains* dispels any notion of permanence of the text in the form of a permanent meaning or stable interpretation.

Before returning to iterability, it is first necessary to explore this further. The binary between permanence and the *remains* rests upon one of the key binaries in which the *remains* is an undecidable, that between presence and absence. I am not suggesting that the *remains* is the opposite of permanence. I am, however, arguing against the possibility of a complete or eternal permanence where the sign is identified as self-identical and unchanging through time. Much like Colebrook and McHoul’s theory on the undecidable as the opposite of complete determinacy, through their focus on indeterminacy and context, my understanding of the *remains* relies upon an understanding of permanence. In fact, as I

will argue in the following chapters, the *remains* is a requirement for any permanency. Yet, crucially, the *remains* is not an entity that can be seen as having permanence, nor is it absent. This can be explained through the binary of presence and absence and the marginalisation that occurs of both terms.

As noted in the final definition I provided of the *remains*, the *remains* develops as a result of the Derrida's work on mourning. Dooley and Kavanagh note how the cinder or *remains* stands in for something that was formerly present that is now gone, absent. While the ashes bear witness to the existence of an object or concept, they can never be re-formed into what was formerly there (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 7). The *remains* is thus both the unreadable trace of what formerly was and the indestructible trace of that which we wanted to destroy, as Dooley and Kavanagh describe the act of mourning as both one in which we long to hold on to that which has passed, while simultaneously desiring to let go and move on, for to burn something 'is to desire *both* to keep it *and* to let it go' (Dooley and Kavanagh 2007, 15). These two conflicting demands of mourning, Bennington's 'half-mourning', is why, for Levin, Derrida references the mourning of the Holocaust indirectly, rather than directly or overtly. Levin continues, saying that

Derrida's indirectness is a way of recognising both the impossibility and the necessity of mourning. Subtextual indirectness is thus a way of subverting the work of cultural repression that encloses the process of mourning, the tendency to totalise and essentialise the meaning of the Holocaust deaths an incommensurable event, denying singularity to singular human beings... Indirectness is the philosopher's way of inscribing the Holocaust into his texts, letting them be touched, but not destroyed, by its all-burning and all consuming fires, fires threatening the possibility of the impossibility of any essential *as such* (Levin, 2003, 287).

This passage introduces several key issues at play in the *remains* that link into ideas expressed earlier in this chapter. Beginning with the both/and of the *remains* as mourning, Levin carries this into the issues of essentialism of identity or permanence as such, in addition to the cultural repression or context of mourning that seeks to essentialise.

This understanding of the *remains* after the holocaust/Holocaust is significant throughout much of Derrida's work, as it can be understood as already evident in many of his other quasi-transcendentals. Reflecting on Derrida's *Shibboleth*, Glowacka writes: 'By cremating that which is unique, the flames make its entry into language possible, even if only spectral ash' (2007, 124). Just as iterability alters through language, equally requiring

the concept of the permanence of the self-same for recognition as it alters it through repetition, so does the holocaust allow the concept to be turned into language, yet not completely so for the ash of the burning falls back (Hughes 2004, 53-54). This violent burning in language and mourning leads to an understanding of the *remains* as an accident or marginalised term manifesting in two ways. First, the act of burning attempts to destroy what is other, to remove it and render it as the same and as absence of difference. This is the essentialism of the holocaust that Levin spoke of, the removal of the singularity through the act of mourning as that which is burned becomes ash, a symbol of all absences and deaths. Second, the marginalisation occurs for the opposite reason; even through the violence of the burning, a part falls back as ash, as a cinder. These remainders of the fire are not the presence of the object that was, nor the absence desired by the fire. The *remains* is marginalised both as absence as it results from an act of violence against the concept of language or people as permanence, an act that will be explored more in the final chapter of this thesis. Yet it is also marginalised as presence for it does not completely remove or destroy that which is mourned for and burnt.

Derrida's interrogation of iterability and context is not limited to *Limited Inc.* however; rather it runs throughout many other works. For example, Derrida begins *Living On/Borderlines* with:

If it is a sort of quotation, a sort of 'mention,' as the theoreticians of 'speech acts' feel justified in saying, we must understand the entire performance 'in other words in living?' as having quotation marks around it. But once quotation marks demand to appear, they don't know where to stop. Especially here, where they are not content merely to *surround* the performance 'in other words on living?': they divide it, rework its body and its insides, until it is distended, diverted, out of joint, then reset member by member, word by word, realigned in the most diverse configurations (like a garment spread out on a clothesline with clothespins). For example, several pairs of quotation marks may enclose one or two words: 'living on' ['survivre'], 'on' living ['sur' vivre], 'on' 'living,' on 'living,' producing each time a different semantic and syntactic effect... Forever unable to saturate a context, what reading will ever master the 'on' of living on? (Derrida 2004a, 63).

This is the survival of the text, as I alluded to earlier, in which the inability to saturate the context allows the sign to live on beyond any one reading. This survivability does not come without a cost, however, which manifests in the change Derrida associates with iterability

or the remainder to mark the *remains*. There is a presence in any reading, as Derrida explains that the quotation marks produce differing effects. This, however, also produces an absence of a correct or determinable meaning of either the sign or the intended context.

Below this, however, Derrida questions the notion of a boundary, of demarcation, when he argues:

A question to the translators, a translator's note that I sign in advance: What is translation? Here, economy. To write in a *telegraphic* style, for the sake of economy. But also, *from afar*, in order to get down to what *é-loignement*, *Ent-fernung*, 'dis-tance,' *mean* in writing and in the voice. Telegraphics and telephonics, that's the theme. My desire to take charge of the Translator's Note myself (Derrida 2004a, 63-64).

Derrida seeks to control and take ownership of the meaning of his work through the writing and message of the Translators Note, yet he is aware of his inability to hold on to the meaning due to the distance between words and their contexts. Despite his desire to control both the text and its translation, Derrida is immediately aware of the infinite ways of reading and reiterating both texts. Beginning from the moment of iteration around the quote on living, Derrida warns theoreticians of speech acts of the danger of attempting to limit the meaning of the context of a text. The survivability of the sign and the iterability that creates the conditions for this repetition are linked to the binary of presence and absence through the presence of the remainder that stands in for or marks the absence of the determinable sign or context. The sign can live on, indeed, is forced to live on, much like the dual demands of half-mourning, both the desire to keep and let go; the impotence to move on or bring back.

It is here that the importance of the marginalised side of the binary to meaning becomes clear. Just as the performative needs the parasitic to define itself against, so does the *remains* need both the presence of the remainder and the absence of what is left out. These aspects that exist as a remainder, these accidents or parasitic readings or performances, are therefore necessary for the creation and foundation of any kind of meaning. What we can see now is that while the remains came from a position that theorists such as Austin understand as accidental or parasitic, the supposed accidental nature is actually essential for the possibility of a meaning or, rather, allows that a meaning to be seen as existing. This is inherent in the nature of the second movement from the beginning, as by coming from the position of an accident, the *remains* from the outset always implied

the existence of a non-accident. Again, this is not to imply that the *remains* are an accident as such, as that kind of distinction is of an ethical nature in regards as it presupposes the existence of a 'correct' reading, which the *remains* could not be by definition. Rather, it is by exploring how the *remains* evolves from a position of an accident and how this presupposes the existence of a meaning, that we can see the importance of the notion of the *remains* to the idea of meaning. This leads to the next movement of deconstruction: the *remains* as a necessity for survival.

Chapter 4 – Survival and the *Remains*

A text only lives if it lives *on* [*survit*], and it lives *on* only if it is *at once* translatable *and* untranslatable (always ‘at once ... and ...’: *hama*, at the ‘same’ time). Totally translatable, it disappears as a text, as writing, as a body of language [*langue*]. Totally untranslatable, even within what is believed to be one language, it dies immediately. Thus triumphant translation is neither the life nor the death of the text, only or already its living *on*, its life after life, its life after death. The same thing will be said of what I call writing, mark, trace, and so on. It neither lives nor dies; it lives *on*. And it ‘starts’ only with living on (testament, iterability, remaining [*restance*], crypt, detachment that lifts the strictures of the ‘living’ *recito* or direction of an author not drowned at the edge of his text) (Derrida 2004a, 82-83).

The previous chapter concluded by demonstrating how the *remains* relates to iterability and how this, in turn, further questions the concepts of permanence and temporality. From comparing the *remains* with quasi-transcendental such as the ‘trace’ and iterability, it was evident that the *remains* functions like a trace of difference in the same sign, or the trace of iterability if you will. However, this understanding only functions if one takes into account how Derrida questions notions of privilege and the marginalised in binaries. As shown through his account of iterability, the marginalised side of a binary is crucial in both maintaining and, indeed, allowing for the very possibility of the binary itself. As this chapter will go on to demonstrate, this is evident when considering the idea of a text’s survival in regards to the binary of presence and absence inherent in the *remains*. While presence is privileged over absence in order to justify certain examples of language (such as performatives, for example), this division is not naïve, innocent, or natural. More than this, it is also impossible to maintain, according to Derrida, due to the iterability of the sign. The division between presence and absence requires language to be both repeatable, as all language must be able to be used more than once; otherwise, it would not be able to be used in front of its own definition. Yet the sign must also have a degree of permanence in the individual instance of the sign in order that it be capable of being judged as a correct example of language in contrast to one that is parasitic.

However, as I argued previously, the *remains* disrupts the understanding of both the permanence of the sign as well as pure or unchanged repetition. As Derrida explains,

iterability creates difference through repetition; likewise, the *remains* makes manifest both the permanence of the sign as well as the remainder that escapes any one reading of the sign. There are two parts to this argument. First, that the ambivalence of language between permanence and the remainder is necessary, moreover, as will be explored throughout this chapter, there can only be permanence because of the existence of the remainder, as, indeed, there can only be a remainder because of permanence. While seemingly contradictory, this dual demand shares much with the other binaries that Derrida explores and whose assumptions he exposes, such as those that surround the use of language. As revealed earlier, the ideal examples of language (pure language, performatives, etc.) cannot be considered in isolation from the examples of language that they seek to marginalise or exclude. The ability to cite the self-same sign in multiple contexts, its essential iterability, coupled with the inability to saturate the context in which the sign is used, undermines all attempts to isolate parts of language to the exclusion of others. There is a tension here between the dual requirement that the sign to be recognised as able to function in a way that makes it assessable as a functioning (or non-functioning) speech act and the inherent resistance by the sign to be limited to this sole identity. Thus, there is always the possibility of a remainder of the sign through its iterability as well as the possibility of permanence in the ability to recognise the sign as something encountered previously.

The second part of the argument develops as a consequence of the first. Not only is there always tension between the remainder and permanence, it is this very tension that is crucial to all readings of the language sign. This distinction is important, as by focusing on the *remains* I am not proposing that the permanence of the sign is contaminated and thus no sign can ever function. Derrida does not deny the existence of speech acts or of intended contexts; rather, he explains that neither the concept of context nor of intention can be seen as limiting the possible meanings of the sign for what is then understood as a true meaning, I am likewise not denying meaning in favour of the *remains*. Rather, my position takes the form of a more 'positive affirmation,' much like David Farrell Krell argues for in relation to all of Derrida's work (2000, xi). In light of this, as I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, it is this impossibility for the sign to function solely in one context through the *remains* and the need for a remainder that creates the possibility of meaning. The *remains*, as between permanence and the remainder, is what allows the sign to continue on, to survive.

In order to explain this tension between permanence and the remainder, this chapter will build upon the previous, exploring the concept of survivability in Derrida's reading of Walter Benjamin and Maurice Blanchot. What is pertinent in his engagement with these theorists is both the similarities in his thought to theirs, while also the importance that both language and translation take in their respective theories. As such, through exploring Derrida's engagement with Benjamin and Blanchot, the connections between the *remains* and translation will be made clearer. For Benjamin, translation becomes a necessary part of a text's survival, as it is through the potential for translation, yet also the impossibility of a perfect translation, that the text can be understood as continuing on. Likewise, for Blanchot, it is the impotence that one encounters in the face of literature, specifically through the inability to completely grasp the sign that the text is seen as living on. This harks back to the debate I briefly touched upon in the opening chapter, over the difficulty of translating religious texts or poetry, where there is disagreement over the importance over the words vs. the sense of the text. More importantly, however, both Benjamin and Blanchot's understanding of the survival of the text develop along similar lines as the definitions of the *remains* I explored in the second chapter.

Before I turn to Benjamin, it is important to note how the notion of survival discussed in this chapter resists the concept of intention and saturation explored in the previous chapter. A short passage of *Des Tours de Babel* and a commentary of Derrida's reading by Craig Bartholomew creates a succinct introduction to the connection between intention and survival explored in this chapter. Throughout the essay, Derrida turns from his reading of Walter Benjamin to the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, in particular, the ambivalence at the heart of the term 'Babel'; ambivalence Derrida equates as true for all proper names. Jerome's Vulgate records Genesis 11:9 as: 'et idcirco vocatum est nomen eius Babel quia ibi confusum est labium universae terrae et inde dispersit eos Dominus super faciem cunctarum regionum'¹³ (St. Jerome in Walton 1687, 42). The Vulgate is considered to be one of the most important versions of the Bible, as it was used as the primary translation for over 1000 years, in so becoming one of the foundational texts and theories of Western translation scholarship (Robinson 2002, 23). Most versions of the Bible

¹³ And therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confounded the language of all the earth and from there the Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of all countries (own translation)

in English translate this as meaning the city itself was named Babel, which in turn denotes confusion.

However, the version of the bible that Derrida uses, translated by Chouraquis and infamous for this specific aspect or word choice (Bartholomew 1998, 310), translates the story of Babel differently. The difference is clear where Derrida quotes directly from the Chouraquis version:

YHWH dit:/ “Oui ! Un seul peuple, une seule lèvre pour tous:/voilà ce qu’ils commencent à faire!...Allons! Descendons! Confondons là leurs lèvres,/l’homme n’entendra plus la lèvre de son prochain.”/YHWH les disperse de là sur la face de toute la terre./Ils cessent de bâtir la ville./Sur quoi il clame son nom: Babel, Confusion,/car là, YHWH confond la lèvre de toute la terre,/et de là YHWH les disperse sur la face de toute la terre...

YHWH says:/‘Yes! A single people, a single lip for all:/that is what they begin to do!...Come let us descend! Let us confound their lips,/man will no longer understand the lip of his neighbour.’/YHWH disperses them from here over the face of the earth./They cease to build the city./Over which he proclaims his name Babel, Confusion,/for there, YHWH confounds the lip of all the earth (Derrida 2007a, 195).

It would be problematic to suggest that one translation of the passage is more suitable or correct than any other translation given the arguments explored in the opening chapter. The multiple meanings are opened up as the word that leads to the differing versions, *eius*, can be translated as any pronoun, he/she/it/they. However, Craig Bartholomew argues that Derrida’s reading is ‘marginally possible’ but ‘grammatically unlikely’ as the word city and the suffix used before the name are both feminine and ‘Yahweh is almost always referred to as masculine’ (Bartholomew 1998, 315). Despite acknowledging the possibility of the plurality of possible meanings, Bartholomew criticises Derrida’s reading, arguing that Derrida ignores the canonical context of the narrative and diminishes the authorial discourse interpretation in favour of what Bartholomew terms a performance interpretation (*ibid*, 313). Bartholomew cites Wolterstorff’s distinction between the two interpretations, arguing where ‘in performance interpretation the goal is a creative, exciting reading, in authorial discourse interpretation the goal is a true reading’ (*ibid*, 313).

In an argument similar to J. L. Austin’s (1976), as explored in the previous chapter, Bartholomew first falls back upon a ‘correct’ reading based on authorial intention, before accusing Derrida of practicing creative play rather than rigorous interpretation. Moreover,

he seems to imply that Derrida is marginalising the notion of authorial intention in favour of this quasi-nihilistic creative play. Derrida, however, as this chapter will demonstrate, never argues against the role of context in determining meaning and the possibility of authorial intention, he just does not seek to privilege either above other possibilities. Rather than privileging a reading of free play, Derrida instead reveals this to be an undecidable, which Christopher Norris notes as more than an ambiguous word as it provides more than an appreciation of the richness of language (Norris 1987, 37). While the Latin word *eius* does not contain meanings that are as opposed to each other, there is a significant difference between the phrases ‘therefore its name was called Babel’ and ‘over which he proclaims his name.’

The importance of this difference of interpretation, and indeed the subsequent debate over intention that develops as a result, is clear when we consider it in light of the understandings of the *remains* from the second chapter. Bartholomew is seeking to control or limit the sign, the legacy left in words. Yet, as discussed in regards to the *remains* as corpus, the sign is not a simple legacy as it is always handed over to others who inherit it as they wish. As such, the name that God proclaims over the city is no longer his to control from the moment it is uttered, nor indeed it is possible to decide on its meaning definitively in commentaries after. This undecidable leads Derrida to investigate the act of naming at the heart of the passage. It is no longer a matter of God naming the city, in doing so, becoming the father of languages through creating the multiplicity of tongues in the act of naming ‘confusion’; here, it is God naming *himself*. Babel is not only the word for confusion, nor just the proper name for the city; Babel is the proper name of God, the name he has chosen. God names both himself and his act of naming as Confusion. In doing so, ‘God imposes confusion and division with [the Shemites] language but also within his own name’ (Davis 2001, 10), as the name and word Babel belongs both to the Shemites and to God as both proper name and common noun meaning confusion at the same time. Confusion, untranslatable as a proper name, marks the very moment when translation came into existence, the moment translation was born as a necessity for comprehension (Derrida, 2007a, 196). Geoffrey Bennington argues that while the notion of a proper name suggests a proper nomination or direct reference to a person, a link free from the play that affects other language, this is not the case as ‘there is no proper name. What is called by the generic common noun “proper name” must function, it too, in a system of differences’ (Bennington 1993, 105). This functioning in the system of differences echoes concept explored in the

second chapter that the proper name is never one's own; it is always held by, interpreted, and used by others.

However, it is also pertinent to return to the quote from Anais Spitzer, cited in the second chapter, in regards to the crypt. Spitzer's (2011, 43) description of the crypt as holding something secure that the system wished to expunge is also evident in Bartholomew's desire to ignore or correct the meaning of the passage. Despite seeking to limit the meaning of the sign or passage to God naming the city, the possibility exists that it means otherwise. To put it differently, there is something that remains beyond any one interpretation; that is, the possibility of another meaning or way of reading. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, this function of the *remains* is similar to iterability and the trace. However, the *remains* reveals that the text or sign is always open to future readings, to survive beyond any one reading of it, as there are parts that fall back or resist the reading, parts that Spitzer describes as the crypt, as all the possible meanings of the sign cannot be adequately conveyed in any one interpretation. Present as a possibility yet absent in a reading, the *remains* facilitates the possibility of and need for the sign being interpreted in the future.

Bartholomew's notion of intention or a correct way to interpret the sign becoming increasingly problematic, as the sign carries nothing within itself that alerts the reader to or ties the sign itself to a specific context that is 'correct'. Nicole Anderson explains that the metaphysics of presence seeks to attach the concept of presence in the sign to the concept of the proper name, associating it with an unchangeable identity (Anderson 2012, 65). However, 'this traditional concept of the proper name (and as a corollary the subject as presence) is destabilised by Derrida's concept of *différance*. And yet, paradoxically, the proper name only arises because of the system of differences with which it is "inscribed"' (*ibid*, 66). This does not mean that Derrida is advocating an understanding of the sign as devoid of meaning altogether. Rather, as I will explore further in the final chapter of this thesis, this system of play and difference opens up a kind of ethics by moving beyond the homogenising movement of traditional or 'normative' ethics (Anderson 2006, 413). As this chapter will demonstrate, the *remains* allows for future translations due to this play, rather than rendering them problematic or obsolete.

Benjamin's Pure Language and the Text's Survival

The work of Walter Benjamin on language and translation builds upon the connection between marginalisation and survival that I began to address at the end of the previous chapter. Not only does Benjamin rely on a binary, he also relies upon an understanding of intention and marginalisation similar to that in Austin, as explored in the last chapter. However, he also posits that a text survives in its afterlife because of these binaries, as will be explained shortly. The movement of deconstruction as existing between two terms, between both terms of a binary and subsequently not completely either term, is continued in 'Des Tours de Babel' (2007a). In this essay, Derrida investigates two binaries that occur in Walter Benjamin's understanding of language and translation, specifically what Benjamin refers to as 'pure language' (W. Benjamin 2009, 78). The first binary, between any one language and another, is encountered through the task of translation. As discussed in the opening chapter, Benjamin's theory of translation is similar to a position that I termed a hermeneutic understanding. Hermeneutic theories of translation share a commonality through the way they understand languages as discrete from one another yet capable of being brought together through the act of translation. It was in this act of coming together that languages could grow through the acquisition of new concepts (Schopenhauer 1992, 33).

Benjamin develops upon this, arguing that not only does language grow through the act of translation, developing towards a messianic (W. Benjamin 2009, 78) or Adamic language used before the fall of Man (W. Benjamin 1996, 71), the growth itself reveals something crucial about the universal nature of all languages. While Benjamin acknowledges that there are real differences between languages, he postulates that there is a common feature that unifies all languages, which he refers to as their 'kinship': the underlying intention of a language (W. Benjamin 2009, 78; A. Benjamin 1989, 95). For Benjamin, the desire to express things and concepts in words is a universal aspect of all languages, as it develops from the universal intention that he argues exists as the base for his pure language (W. Benjamin 2009, 78). Thus, Benjamin understands pure language as the ideal form or beginning from which all languages stem, from before the fall (W. Benjamin 1996, 71-72), the language from the 'Garden of Eden' with which Adam named the world (*ibid*, 68). However, commentators such as Andrew Benjamin argue that this understanding of an Adamic language does not necessarily imply an original fall and as

such pure language can be understood as a constitution to come rather than reconciliation (A. Benjamin 1989, 99).

Before exploring how this relates to the remains, it is first important to examine what Walter Benjamin means by pure language and how he theorises of its growth. Pure language, according to Benjamin, is separate from everyday languages, yet he argues that all languages originate from it or aim towards it as an ideal (Almond 2002, 187). In the act of translation, Benjamin's translator is made aware of the gap between word and object and, more importantly, aware of how that gap can be reduced through careful word choice and respectful reproduction (W. Benjamin 2009, 81). Thus, one can translate because there is a similarity between all languages that comes from intention, all languages desire to express something, some concept or meaning; they all have an intention to communicate (*ibid*, 79-80). Rather than growing into something new, for Benjamin, the growth of language points back towards a language that he postulates as the foundation of all language (Almond 2002, 190). Benjamin thus posits his own term inside this binary, as pure language functions as a both/and in that it does not belong to one language per se but as part of both because it exists between the two languages.

Benjamin's concept of pure language creates a logocentric position, however, in the binary between everyday languages that are used and translated and pure language. Not only does this binary perpetuate the notion of an origin, which is problematic, as shown in the opening chapter, it also creates a hierarchical dichotomy with the languages translated placed beneath the pure language that supposedly underpins them. Benjamin moves from a dualism in which both terms are theoretically equal, that between languages, to a binary that perpetuates a privileging of origin and the metaphysics of presence, that between the original language and fragmented copy (Smerick 2009, 49). This binary perpetuates the metaphysics of presence deconstructed in the first chapter, as Benjamin postulates that pure language is the language used by God in the act of creation and by Adam in the act of naming (Benjamin 1996, 71). As such, the language and the concepts and objects it seeks to express are understood to dovetail perfectly. Benjamin conceives of this language as being full of presence as it is the very language used to create the objects initially. This second binary is one that echoes the binaries deconstructed previously, those of presence and absence, as well as original and copy. It is in this division between original and copy, and pure language as past and future, that the difference between Benjamin's work and the *remains* is evident.

As I argued in the previous chapter, the *remains* exists between differing temporal moments of the selfsame sign. This is to say that while the sign changes in its repetition, as different parts fall back as remainders and resist the reading, it is not understood as a completely different sign in the different temporal or spatial context in which it is received. This is similar to the way Derrida understands iterability, as I explained earlier. However, there is an element of simultaneous survivability and mourning in the *remains* that I argue as unique. While Benjamin writes of a text's afterlife through translation (2009, 76), this is not the same as the survival I argue for in regards to the *remains*. The division between temporal moments of the sign through the *remains* needs to be carefully defined so that my argument is clear. Envisaging the *remains* as the cinder, specifically the cinder that exists as a remainder after what Derrida calls the holocaust, could be understood as creating a binary between an origin and later manifestations of the event or sign, similar to that in Benjamin's work. Specifically, it could appear to be quite similar in its nature to the logocentric argument of a pure origin and contaminated repetition, which was explored in the previous chapter in regard to Western translation theory.

The understanding of the *remains* as that which comes after something has passed can be understood as implying a time when the object was complete, when it was whole. This is similar to what Benjamin argues in relation to the link between languages and pure language. Regardless of whether Benjamin postulates this pure language as the past or future of language and, indeed, whether he understands it as a possibility or impossibility, still does not erase the fact that he argues for a language of pure presence in relation to the languages used in everyday life. This distinction between a pure origin and debased copy, however, is not what I argue for in regards to the *remains*. By positing the *remains* as between temporal moments, I am not arguing for the existence of a pure origin. Rather, as will be revealed by my argument throughout this chapter and the next, I am instead proposing that the *remains* exists between temporal moments of the sign without or despite the absence of an ideal origin, as discussed in the second chapter. However, it is important to note that the binary that the *remains* operates between, that of differing temporal moments of the same sign, is not reducible to or reliant upon a logocentric understanding of origin.

Returning to Benjamin's understanding of intention, it is important to note how his concept of 'pure' language develops as a consequence of two binaries: one between languages in translation and the other between ordinary language and pure language. The

privileging inherent in these binaries is evident in the way that Benjamin theorises of language. For Benjamin, pure language stems from the idea that the underlying intentions between languages are the same; that languages wish to express the same concept or idea (A. Benjamin 1989, 92). Accordingly, pure language is a result of an underlying desire to express the same things, the same ‘mental beings’: ‘Languages are not strangers to one another, but are, *a priori* and apart from all historical relationships, interrelated in what they want to express’ (W. Benjamin 2009, 74). It is important to note that Benjamin does not mean that all the languages of man are alike and it is this identical nature that demonstrates the existence of these *a priori* connections (A. Benjamin 1989, 93). Rather, Benjamin sees languages as distinct from one another and it is only through the act of translation that the kinship of language is revealed. He explains:

If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translations, this is not accomplished through a vague likeness between adaptation and original. It stands to reason that kinship does not necessarily involve likeness... Rather, all suprahistorical kinship of language rests in the intention underlying each language as a whole – an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realised only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other: pure language (W. Benjamin 2009, 75).

What is important here is how Benjamin links translation and language to the concept of intention, a connection that ultimately stems from a specific understanding of context, as I showed previously in regard to speech acts theory and performatives. Benjamin claims that language is created in order to express something, and it is this desire that allows for the intentions of different languages to be understood as the same. While this argument that languages wish to express something is fairly straight forward, the use of intention to describe it is problematic. While languages may exist in order to communicate, this does not mean that all languages desire or intend to express the same thing. However, Benjamin’s theory is more nuanced than a reduction of all languages to intention, as he acknowledges that languages might have differences in their ‘modes of intention’ (W. Benjamin 2009, 78).

Despite acknowledging differences between languages, Benjamin’s use of intention is still problematic. By positing intention as the foundation for pure language, Benjamin requires the possibility of grasping the intention of language. More than this, he argues that the intention of languages must be the same. When Benjamin states that these modes of intention are incomplete, he explains that this is a result of the manner in which intention

resides not in the individual languages themselves, rather it is located in the act of languages supplementing each other (Benjamin 2009, 78). Indeed, it is from this supplementation of languages that meaning 'is able to emerge as pure language from the harmony of all the various modes of intention' (*ibid*, 78). While Benjamin does not argue for an authorial intention that governs this true meaning, he does still rely on an understanding of an original or pure meaning that can be understood in a particular context, regardless if the context (pure language) is possible or impossible to achieve. Thus, Benjamin sets pure language as the goal of translation and the endpoint for all languages, thereby marginalising or diminishing the role of everyday languages to that of a stepping-stone that is but a condition for the appearance or creation of pure language. For Benjamin, pure language does not reveal anything about the text itself; instead, it uncovers something about the existence of all texts and languages.

There are two important requirements inherent in Benjamin's understanding of language. First, that all language has a teleological drive towards a pure language. Second, there is the requirement that pure language is not the result of an individual text's relationship to language but rather a comment on the language's relationship with other languages. This second requirement argues against any attempt to theorise a hierarchy of texts, in that there are not texts that are more suitable for pure language or translation than others. Yet there is also Benjamin's requirement that there has to be a 'true' meaning in the text, a meaning that is expressed through the teleological drive towards the pure language. This is evident by extending the logic inherent in Benjamin's theory; if there is a language that can perfectly express all concepts and ideas and if a text were written in this pure language, it would then be the ideal version of the text. Thus, pure language supposes an ideal reading of the text. The concept of a pure language thus marginalises everyday languages. This appeal to a universal intention to create or allow for a pure meaning, as with most uses of intention, is an appeal to a structure outside of language, an appeal to a definable and set context.

As with the notion of authorial intention argued by Bartholomew earlier, and likewise in regards to speech acts, Benjamin relies on something separate from the text that is responsible for its meaning. For Benjamin, pure language manifests neither in the languages involved in the act of translation nor in the work being translated. Rather, it exists separately from the languages, underneath them as either their past, if it follows that there was a unified language before Babel from which all languages came forth or, as a future of

language as commentators such as Andrew Benjamin argue (1989, 98). The existence of pure language requires a belief in an ideal language that can be realised through translation, a 'messiah like' language to come which will allow a perfect dovetailing of word to object (Vries 1992, 444). Bringing everyday language closer to pure language through translation and supplementation is reminiscent of the Kabbalistic attempts to find the name of God through careful readings of the Torah (A. Benjamin 1989, 97). Walter Benjamin recognises this through his use of a metaphor that is derived from Kabbalism, that of broken vessels, to describe the act of translation:

Fragments of a vessel which are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not be like one another. In the same way a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognisable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel (W. Benjamin 1999, 79).

This passage highlights the distinction Benjamin makes between the universal intention of languages and the differing modes of intention, yet it also reveals the problematic understanding of intention. While the fragments need not resemble each other, as the languages have differing modes of intention and thus one word cannot be substituted neatly for another, the fragments must be alike in order to fit together as part of the larger object; that is to say alike in how they link back to pure language. Translation does not reproduce the original; it allows the language of the original to grow into something larger. The two languages, the two pieces of the pure language amphora, combine into a larger piece, a larger tongue, despite being seemingly disparate.

For Benjamin, as with the other theorists I categorised as hermeneutic in the opening chapter, as the languages come together they are both altered, and therefore, both are understood as growing through the act of translation. Derrida locates two aspects that underlie Benjamin's translation theory: the transmittable and the remains, explaining that: 'He [the translator] wants to touch the untouchable, that which remains of the text when one has extracted from it the communicable meaning, when one has transmitted that which can be transmitted' (Derrida 2002a, 124). In this passage, Derrida argues that Benjamin conceives of both an aspect of language that can be comprehended and something else that

resists this comprehension. Using a metaphor of a fruit¹⁴ Benjamin describes it as a ‘core’ of the original; a core that remains after the flesh of the fruit is gone. It is this same core that is enveloped in the skin and flesh of the new translation.

In this metaphor, Benjamin is referring to an inability of a perfect translation, in that the skin of the fruit hangs off the core as it is not a perfect fit. In this, Benjamin makes the point that the construction of language is inherently tied to the object it is desiring to express, that the original language has an organic relationship which is broken in any other language or sign. This break between the sign and the object, as the new sign does not envelope or convey the object or meaning in the same way, is similar to the relation between meaning and sign that has been advocated for throughout this thesis. However, while Benjamin shows the possibility of removing the sign or meaning from the original context, he still relies upon a metaphor or understanding of language as having a core to it, a kernel of truth or meaning inherent in the original. When examined in light of the other passages and work of Benjamin explored so far, around his argument for a pure language, and his messianic tones and imagery of the vase, there is a crucial point of difference between his conceptualisation of language in the act of translation and that of Derrida, as Derrida would not argue for a ‘core’ of language. Instead, as this thesis has shown, there is only the play of meaning through *différance* and the deferral onto contexts to come.

This concept of a core meaning is similar to the notion of the kernel in translation theory, as explored in the opening chapter. This understanding is important for Benjamin, as conceptualising of translation in this manner allows the intention to pass through to the translation despite the differing modes used to describe it. In different terms this would allow for an idea of the fundamental meaning of a text to be transferred through the translation, yet remain free of the contamination or degradation the translation or different context might bring. Transferring a core of meaning or pure language and adjusting the outside skin is thus similar to the argument of authorial intention explored earlier with Bartholomew; regardless of the translation used, the authorial intention underneath or driving it is still viewed as intact. By differentiating between a fundamental meaning and a skin of language, Benjamin is distinguishing between the everyday languages of today and the pure language he sees as the aim of all translation. In doing so, Benjamin is creating a

¹⁴ While content and language form a certain unity in the original, like a fruit and its skin, the language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe with ample folds’ (W. Benjamin 1999, 76).

divide between the language of communication (the skin) and the language of meaning (the core) and using this division to marginalise everyday language. By focusing on the idea of a 'core' to the text, Benjamin is falling into the logocentrism that Derrida deconstructs throughout much of his work, that of a pure presence inside the sign. It does not matter whether this core is ever to be realised. By arguing for this division, Benjamin effectively creates the same division as the theorists explored in the opening chapter, that between the presence of an original or pure meaning in a type of sign or language, and a different example of language that does not have this presence. This reliance on context or intention to identify and privilege a certain type or example of language is also evident in Derrida's reading of J. L. Austin and John Searle. Indeed, the idea of a core of the text that exists separately from any translation or reading, yet allows the reader or translator to perceive that it was there, functions in many ways akin to the understanding of an ideal speech act.

Despite similarities between Benjamin's work and Austin's, namely through the marginalisation inherent in their respective binaries, there is a different understanding or tension in this essay that manifests as a result of the difference between Benjamin's ideal language and Austin's performatives. Where Austin seeks to exclude another language from his analysis, as argued previously, Benjamin requires other languages to be present. Without other languages coming together in translation, the supra-historical relationship could never be revealed. What is identified as the moment in which the marginalised aspect of language is revealed, the languages themselves used during the act of translation, is also simultaneously the moment where the everyday language manifests itself as a necessary component in the creation of pure meaning. Benjamin explains the significance of translation to pure language when he writes that:

Translations that are more than transmissions of subject matter come into being when in the course of its survival a work has reached the age of its fame. Contrary, therefore, to the claims of bad translators, such translations do not so much serve the work as owe their existence to it. The life of the originals attains in them to its ever-renewed latest and most abundant flowering (W. Benjamin 1999, 73).

The survival of the work, as well as the survival of the translation, is tied to the repetition of the sign through the act of translation. Thus, the text only has a degree of permanence, of survivability, due to its repetition and alteration through the act of translation.

It is at this moment that the crux of the chapter becomes clear. The survivability of the text occurs through its need to be reinterpreted, retranslated. Looking back at the example used at the beginning of this chapter, over the two versions of the story of the tower of Babel, we can see how the *remains* is the condition for this survivability. It is from the inability to completely grasp or limit the sign, through the possibility of differing meanings from differing contexts, which necessitates continued translations, translations that, according to Benjamin, are integral to the survival of the text. Thus, it is the notion of a remainder, of the *remains*, that necessitates the continued survival and translation of the sign. It is important to note how Benjamin understands the act of translation as both a result of the binary between languages in general, yet also a requirement for the recovery of pure language, as explained previously. The tension between the remainder and permanence, which I argue as caused by the *remains*, thus becomes a necessity both for translation as well as Benjamin's understanding of pure language. By requiring both the languages used in the act of translation while also marginalising these same languages, Benjamin's argument provides a concise position from which to highlight the manner in which deconstruction moves from the movement of exploring marginalisation to this understanding of the necessary tension between presence and absence. This is evident in Benjamin's thought when he focuses upon the act of translation in order to find a way back to pure language, despite marginalising everyday language in order to privilege a language that is understood as having complete presence of concept. Thus, by necessity, Benjamin requires the very language he marginalises.

The connection identified between translation and survival does not suggest that texts require translation, rather that a text requires the potential for translation. The distinction between the two is important; Benjamin is not arguing that a text can only survive as such once it has been translated, which would be the case if a text requires translation. Rather, he suggests that a text requires the possibility for translation, that there is the potential for the text to be translated and it is this very potential that leads us to what Benjamin maintains is the afterlife of the text. For Benjamin, translations are more than just transference of meaning; they do more than serve the work. Rather, the work owes its existence to the very translations it produces (2009, 71). This posits an afterlife of the text that stems from an *a priori* connection between languages, a supra-historical connection, that which Benjamin calls 'pure language'. While he is not explicitly discussing the *remains* in the sense that I conceive of it, it is important to note that, for Benjamin, it is

through translations that the ‘pure language’ comes forth or arises. In this distinction, we can see something similar to the definition Derrida has of the sign, its need for iterability. A sign requires the *potential* to be repeated in a different context from that which it was intended in order to be a sign, not that it must be repeated. Likewise, this chapter will argue that the tension between the remainder and presence, the tension that results from the *remains*, is an integral and necessary part of the act of reading.

In highlighting the similarity between Benjamin’s afterlife of the text and the *remains*, I am not arguing that they are identical. Pure language, for Benjamin, emanates from God; more specifically it comes from an understanding of the language that God spoke during the act of creation. Derrida’s exploration of translation develops through questioning this concept of a pure or religious origin of language or signs. As opposed to exploring the language that God is understood as having spoke during the act of creation, Derrida investigates the actions of God in the story of the Tower of Babel. Where Benjamin focuses on the language used by God in creation, Derrida instead highlights the importance of the moment that God creates everyday languages by naming confusion and scattering the builders across the face of the earth, in so doing creating the requirement for translation. Derrida explains that:

[God] destines [the Shemites] to translation, he subjects them to the law of a translation both necessary and impossible; in a stroke with his translatable-untranslatable name he delivers a universal reason, but he simultaneously limits its very universality: forbidden transparency, impossible univocity. Translation becomes law, duty and debt, but the debt one can no longer discharge. Such insolvency is found marked in the very name of Babel: which at once translates and does not translate itself, belongs without belonging to a language and indebts itself to itself for an insolvent debt, to itself as if other (Derrida 2002a, 111).

Translation, for Derrida, comes from a debt or absence, as there is a perceived gap that needs to be filled. The use of the term debt to describe translation evokes a similar understanding to that of the *remains* as corpus, in that it acts as an inheritance. The name Babel functions like the signature, as explored in the second chapter, in that it belongs without belonging. Where the signature marks the corpus to be passed over as inheritance or a legacy, an inheritance that requires interpretation in the absence of he or she who signs, Babel marks the inheritance of translation. However, this inheritance also requires interpretation, translation is not a given, nor indeed is the term Babel. This is why Derrida

describes Babel as a debt; it requires a meaning be placed upon it, a meaning chosen on its behalf: Babel becomes the name of translation, confusion, the tower and God all at once.

However, in understanding this debt as a beginning, Derrida does not suggest that it is an origin as Benjamin argues in regards to pure language. Rather than existing as a pure sign, the word that leads to translation as a necessity, Babel, is already a word that is part of the play of signifiers and thus part of the debt of translation. Thus, there is no sign that is free of this debt of translation, not even the sign that marks the very requirement for all translation. Despite disrupting language by requiring translation, Babel cannot free itself of this need to translate; deconstruction reveals that nothing can free itself from the system it disrupts (Anderson 2012, 71). As explained previously, the translation that Derrida focuses on reveals ambivalence in the sign that allows the story to be more than God naming the tower, rather it becomes the moment where God names himself. From the moment God proclaims himself as Confusion he makes translation the only recourse to get back to him.

The link between the *remains* and pure language manifests in this ambivalence and the debt it entails, as this notion of pure language that allows the growth of the languages through translation is present in an absence. It is the absence of the pure language in everyday life, and thus the need for other languages, which leads to translation; the translation that in turn then reveals the supra-historical kinship of languages, according to Benjamin. Yet this pure language that is represented through translation is never seen, never present as such, as Derrida notes:

I said “re-mark” the affinity among the language to name the strangeness of an ‘expression’ which is neither a simple ‘presentation’ nor simply anything else. In a mode that is solely anticipatory, annunciatory, almost prophetic, translation renders *present* an affinity that is never present in this presentation (Derrida 2002a, 120).

The present affinity reveals something that is not present, something that is absent, in pure language. This is why Benjamin’s pure language functions, as noted earlier, in a similar way to Derrida’s *remains*: the pure language is persistently hidden after the representation of the original in the form of the new translation. This does not mean that the two are analogous, as the differences I noted previously prohibit any such distinction. Rather, it is at the very moment that Derrida exposes the limits or tensions inside Benjamin’s binary between languages and pure language, that he discovers a tension in a foundational

understanding in Benjamin's work. Thus, the tension between presence and absence, the tension manifested by the *remains*, is responsible for the survival or after-life of the text as it necessitates the need for translation. This argument of the connection between survival and the *remains* is developed further through Derrida's reading of Blanchot.

Maurice Blanchot and 'Living On'

The concept of survival through the tension between presence and absence, that which I characterise of the *remains*, is continued in Derrida's reading of Maurice Blanchot. The deconstruction of the binary between presence and absence shares much in common with the division between the two slopes of language and death proposed by Maurice Blanchot, as examined by Derrida in 'Living On/Borderlines' (2004a). Derrida's essay is divided into two separate texts that mirror Blanchot's thought. First, 'Living On,' which discusses the survival of a text, and second, 'Borderlines,' a work that discusses the nature of a border or limit demarcating the text and the role of translation in creating this textual limit. Running beneath 'Living On,' resembling a continuous footnote, 'Borderlines' speaks to an absent translator, informing of the necessity of a boundary for translation. Above and in apparent opposition to 'Borderlines,' 'Living On' theorises of the inexhaustibility of the sign that, as a necessity, allows for a text's survival. Exploring Percy Bysshe Shelley's *The Triumph of Life* alongside two texts by Blanchot, *The Madness of the Day* and *Death Sentence*, Derrida's division of his text into these two parts reveals the tension at play between the two kinds of language that Blanchot postulates as the two slopes of literature. For Blanchot, these slopes occur through how language is divided between every day or communicative language and literary or artistic language (Blanchot 1995, 325).

'Living On/Borderlines' is not merely a simple deconstruction of this binary, nor indeed are any of Derrida's texts, as there is a kind of symbiosis in this work that develops from the relationship that Derrida has with Blanchot. Stephen Barker explains this relationship when he notes that Derrida and Blanchot '*read each other, as readers and as writers; and what is unique about their quasi-mutual work is that they read each other while and in writing, dictating a new, richer, and more complex sense of the *ré-cit* as citation and re-citation*' (Barker 2004, 98). As a consequence, 'Living On/Borderlines' is tied to the work of Blanchot at the moment it seeks to explore and deconstruct the ideas of textuality argued by Blanchot. The division of 'Living On/Borderlines' into two seemingly separate texts allows Derrida to explore and deconstruct a binary in language that is also questioned

in Blanchot's theory of language, in particular the focus on a language for literature. There is empathy between Derrida's work and Blanchot's that is evident in the way that Blanchot describes the relationship between the two slopes. In order to explore this, it is first necessary to outline Blanchot's theory and Derrida's understanding of it in more detail.

Blanchot's first slope consists of communicational language, where language can be seen as a vehicle for conveying meaning. In conveying both meaning and concepts, the language of this slope is understood as negating the actual object in favour of the idea of the object. Thus, the communicational side of language creates an absence of the object, which is replaced by a sign (Blanchot 1995, 30). This negation is not a natural one, in so far as the signs used are not naturally linked to the objects themselves. Blanchot uses the example of the word *tree* to highlight this, arguing that while the word 'tree' can be used to represent something that is absent, 'nothing is more foreign to the tree than the word *tree*' (Blanchot 1989, 39). Thus, the first slope picks up on the absence of the object itself, as Blanchot writes:

A word may give me its meaning, but first it suppresses it. For me to be able to say, "This woman," I must somehow take her flesh-and-blood reality away from her, cause her to be absent, annihilate her. The word gives me the being, but it gives it to me deprived of being. The word is the absence of that being, its nothingness, what is left of it when it has lost being – the very fact that it does not exist (Blanchot 1995, 322).

This first slope is thus linked to violence, the violence of the word or language to the object. More specifically, the violence Blanchot speaks of here, which annihilates the woman spoken of, was traditionally linked to writing alone, as explained in the opening chapter. The present sign stands in for the absence of object or concept; thus, once more, there is the binary of presence and absence.

The ability to represent something that is absent is also a link to an understanding of death for Blanchot, specifically a certain mastery of death. Not only is the object replaced by a sign that presents it in the object's absence, but the sign used also is not natural to the object itself. As such, language is understood as able to control the absences used, or to understand it another way, it controls the death of the object as it organises and places the sign to stand in its place (Blanchot 1995, 322). Ulrich Haase and William Large explain that this understanding of absence is not confined to the sign; rather, it is linked to a conceptualisation of death in the way that the subject is seen to be in control of their own

death (Haase and Large 2001, 43). However, in defining this slope, Blanchot is not advocating that this understanding of death or language is the correct or best understanding of language. Rather, as I will argue shortly, his two slopes share many similarities with Derrida's half-mourning. Instead, Blanchot is setting up this understanding of language as communication in order to contrast it with the next slope, that of artistic language or literature.

Blanchot's second slope develops upon the ideas of negation expressed in the first, towards what is termed a 'double absence' (Haase and Large 2001, 32). This double absence defines when the sign is not only a negation of the reality of the object in the world; it is also a negation of the sign itself. This second absence develops in light of the destruction in language, specifically when language finds itself unable to refer to objects or concepts completely. Blanchot explains:

words, having the power to make things "arise" at the heart of their absence – words which are masters of this absence – also have the power to disappear in it themselves, to absent themselves marvellously in the midst of the totality which they realise... which they accomplish eternally by destroying themselves there endlessly (Blanchot 1989, 43).

In a similar manner to Derrida's description of *différance*, Blanchot argues that at the very moment that signs render objects absent, they also render themselves absent as signs can only refer to other signs; they disappear in the middle of the text. For Blanchot, this occurs in literature, as the focus is on the writing itself rather than the act of communication. The second absence comes from the heart of what Blanchot sees as the artistic or literature slope of language, as the sign in literature or art aims not merely to convey an idea but to express more, to be 'literary'; to be language that seeks to discover and understand the object before the advent of language (Haase and Large 2001, 60). Where the first slope seeks to comprehend the object in consciousness, the second seeks to merge the unconscious subject with the reality of things (Critchley 1997, 54). Seeking to undo the violence caused by the act of naming and communicating enacted through the first slope, the second slope 'becomes concerned with the presence of things before consciousness and the writer exist; it seeks to retrieve the reality and anonymity of existence prior to the dialectic-Sadistic death drive of the writer' (*ibid*, 55).

Akin to the first slope, the second has a connection with death. However, due to the differences in negation, it links to a very different understanding of death. Where the first

slope proclaimed a mastery over death, in the sense that the sign controls or creates the absence and death of the object it replaces, the second is linked more to impotence, the inability of the unconscious mind to control its death. Drawing on Levinas' concept of the *il y a*, what he defines as the 'other night' in which objects and concepts are free from the mastery of the subject (Levinas 1978, 57), Blanchot understands of literature as the impossibility of death, as the space where the mastery to control life and death is undone (Blanchot 1989, 114). Specifically, Blanchot conceives of this death and, by association literature, as forcing us to acknowledge and face the anonymity of the concepts as they appear in Levinas' 'other night' (Critchley 1997, 57; Haase and Large 2001, 61). Where one slope of language reveals the world as being full of possibility, the other side exposes us to passivity, as all of our possibilities are reduced to nothing (Blanchot, 1989, 114). The tension between the two accounts of death is similar to that in the *remains* and Derrida's half-mourning. Where one slope speaks of mastery over absence, the second posits a haunting by an unknowable presence.

This dichotomy of death that mirrors the two slopes of literature, as well as the connection between the two, is further developed through the differences Blanchot argues of between the 'book' and the 'work'¹⁵. The book belongs to the first side of death, as it is the author's mastery over words and signs. The Work, however, belongs to the second side of death; the Work is the un-sayable, it is what the author is attempting and failing to say through his book. The book is a feeble attempt to gain control over the Work, yet the Work always eludes the author's grasp. While the first side of death or the first slope of literature makes the author present the Work as a success, as his or her text, the reality is that the Work is what made the author write the book; as such the Work has a certain mastery over the author (Haase and Large 2001, 63). This distinction between the Work and the book is similar to Benjamin's distinction between languages, as it requires both a pure or original understanding of meaning, which is evident not through its presence, rather through its absence in an inferior copy. However, unlike Benjamin, Blanchot's division is further complicated by its foundation in the slopes of language and their relationship with one another.

¹⁵ In the interests of clarity, I will henceforth refer to Blanchot's 'work' as Work, in order to differentiate it from the definition that sees it as similar to a text.

In engaging with Blanchot's division of language into the two slopes, Derrida is not simply undermining this binary, as Blanchot seemingly pre-empts deconstruction in his description of how the slopes operate. For Blanchot, regardless of the author's intentions, it is impossible to write in one slope as one is always, by necessity, occupying a position between the two slopes. Blanchot elaborates, explaining:

Literature is divided between these two slopes. The problem is that even though they are apparently incompatible, they do not lead toward distinctly different works or goals, and that an art which purports to follow one slope is already on the other. The first slope is meaningful prose. Its goal is to express things in a language that designates things according to what they mean...But still on this side of language, there comes a moment when art realises that everyday speech is dishonest and abandons it. What is art's complaint about everyday speech? It says it lacks meaning: art feels it is madness to think that in each word something is completely present through the absence that determines it, and so art sets off in quest of a language that can recapture this absence itself and represent the endless movement of comprehension (Blanchot 1995, 332-333).

There is a similarity between Blanchot's statement that it is 'madness' to assume a completely present meaning in the sign, with Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism, as outlined in the opening chapter. Once again, the connection between the thought of Blanchot and Derrida is crucial, as their understandings appear to mirror and complement each other. This is also evident in their understanding of borders and demarcations; both Derrida's text and Blanchot's description of the slopes question the notion of a clear boundary between the two points. Just as Blanchot writes that writing that attempts to belong to one slope is already on the other, so does Derrida's text overrun its borders and all attempts to demarcate the difference between the two parts. However, there are slight differences in their respective accounts. As Blanchot postulates two slopes of death, the one of mastery over death and the other the fear of the impossibility of death, the *remains* is both the presence of the figure through mourning and the absence of it as it ceases to be what it once was. As writing is to be understood as neither belonging to one slope nor the other, so too is the *remains* neither presence nor absence, rather it is both simultaneously.

Thus, we return once more to the key argument of this chapter: the *remains*, like other terms in deconstruction, cannot be neatly defined and demarcated as to its meaning and role. This is partly due to the *remains* itself, as Martine Hawkes notes about the cinder, 'When we try to grasp at the cinders, they crumble and burn... the cinder, with its quickly

fading heat, remains elusive' (Hawkes 2012, 936). This is why the *remains* as cinder is such an important metaphor. While the remainder exists as what is left of something, when we grasp at this presence it falls apart as absence. Despite the many similarities noted as being between their thought, there are some key differences between Derrida and Blanchot. The most important of which, certainly in the context of this thesis, is the division Blanchot creates between communication and artistic language. While this division is not exclusive to Blanchot's thought (indeed Blanchot seems to be querying the effectiveness of this division when he argues that any writing that aims to be one is also, inadvertently, the other), there is still a difference between this understanding and the *remains*. Instead of existing between certain kinds or functions of language, I contend that the *remains* is true of all signs or systems of language, as will be argued further in this chapter. Moreover, it is the result of the very act of creating and interpreting signs, and as such, it is not limited to particular contexts or intentions of the author or reader. However, this does not diminish the importance that Blanchot's work has on Derrida's own, especially in the understanding of the *remains* as disrupting presence and absence through the both/and.

As explained above, Blanchot warns that language can never belong exclusively to one slope and, likewise, he is not arguing that one can demarcate writing that belongs exclusively to the book or the Work. Rather, Blanchot calls for ambivalence between the two slopes, as evident in the way he conceives of the role of the author in producing the text or the sign. Likened to Orpheus¹⁶, the writer obeys the demands of the Work, as the author is drawn to the Work through his or her desire to speak of the world in a manner more poetic than the communicational language, a language that does not make absent or annihilate the objects it speaks of. The Work, in attempting to capture the world before language, refers to something that cannot be said, and in doing so, the book always falls short of the demands of the Work (Blanchot 1989, 54). As the writing of the book is an attempt to capture the Work, the language used cannot be demarcated into one or the other, much like the slopes. Blanchot notes that a text that marks itself as being of one slope necessarily transgresses and moves towards the other, thus blurring the idea of a clear gap or line between the two. Despite this blurring, there is still a demand for a demarcated boundary as the metaphor of the slope carries within itself the image of a clearly defined

¹⁶ Blanchot uses the story of Orpheus to explain the act of writing. Just as Orpheus was drawn to look at his wife in the dark night of Hades, so does the writer desire to see and write about the world in the 'other night' (Blanchot 1995, 171).

physical edge. This concept of the boundary provides both another site of necessary tension in binaries, coming as it does through a binary that is continually undermined through the fluidity of either side, as well as a significant difference between Derrida and Blanchot.

The Necessary Tension of the *Remains*

Derrida's own work on Blanchot reflects these two slopes as he divides his text into two parts that mirror Blanchot's theory, yet his division is not a simple demarcation that would allow for a clear definition or understanding of either slope. In order to begin to approach a text, to theorise on it and attempt to understand it, Derrida notes that there must be a *bord*¹⁷, an edge. However, for Derrida, while there must be a demand for a boundary, it must be a demand that can never be fulfilled or realised. Simon Morgan Wortham (2012) writes that Derrida seeks to 'translate the undecidability of Shelley's title, the double genitive of which implies both the triumph of life over death and death's triumphing over life. This very undecidability brings into view the problem of the 'literary' as a form of survival, one that awaits decision in the face of the undecidable itself' (Wortham 2012, 112). For Wortham, the undecidable manifests through the interaction between the different parts of the text, which he sees as bordering upon each other in a way that defies simple concepts of reference or borders. The manner that the texts border each other becomes, for Wortham, an *aporia* surrounding the very idea of survivability or death, as Derrida's 'Living On/Borderlines' reveals 'The aporia of living on as at once death sentence and suspension of death' (Wortham 2012, 113). Wortham's description of the simultaneous suspension of death and death sentence echoes that of Foran's, (Foran 2016, 136) and bears many similarities to the way I identify the *remains* as between presence and absence. Indeed, as I argued throughout the second chapter, the *remains* exists between life and death, as it is both present as a remnant of what was yet absent as it is no longer the object that was there. In mourning for one sentenced to death, we have inadvertently suspended their sentence much like the semi-mourning allows us to mourn for those who have passed while simultaneously forbidding them to completely pass. Thus, the tension at the heart of 'Living On/Borderlines', a tension born of Blanchot's opposing accounts of death and violence, reveals the nature of the tension caused by the *remains*. Specifically, it reveals the nature

¹⁷ The word *bord* is used very strategically by Derrida, as it is an integral part of the word '*aborder*' [approach].

of the border between the remainder and permanence, the *remains* as disrupting and deconstructing this demand for a border.

The crucial difference between Blanchot and Derrida rests on the notion of the boundary and in the way it is used. Blanchot sees the two slopes as being separate in theory, just not in practice, as he describes them as being separate in their aims or intention. For Derrida, however, the definitions that are used to distinguish the slopes on a theoretical level are not so clearly defined as Blanchot understands them; thus, the slopes blur conceptually as well as practically. While Blanchot requires a demand for a border that can be understood in definition just not in the case of individual instances of writing, Derrida sees a demand for a border that can never be realised, neither in definition nor in practice, the spectre one mourns is both present *and* absent but never understood as one or the other. The *remains* disrupts the lines or boundaries between the binary oppositions of meaning vs. non-meaning, in a form that is impossible to demarcate as presence or absence. Thus, the boundary of the *remains*, that which is left behind as a remainder, is in a state of perpetual flux due to the iterability of the sign. Derrida uses the metaphor of a shoreline in order to better conceive of the boundary of the text. The imagery of the shoreline is key to conceptualising the ‘trace’ and *difference*, as it suggests an obscuring of the line between land and sea, as the waves cause a constant fluctuation between visibility and opacity. Derrida explains:

What has happened, if it has happened, is a sort of overrun [*débordement*] that spoils all these boundaries and divisions and forces us to extend the accredited concept, the dominant notion of a ‘text,’ of what I still call a ‘text,’ for strategic reasons, in part – a ‘text’ that is henceforth no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces. Thus the text overruns all the limits assigned to it so far (not submerging or drowning them in an undifferentiated homogeneity, but rather making them more complex, dividing and multiplying strokes and lines) – all the limits, everything that was to be set up in opposition to writing (Derrida 2004a, 69).

In envisaging the movement as one that overruns, Derrida argues that the distinction between terms, such as the division between permanence and the remainder, is not possible to maintain with any purity of separation. This is caused by the terms themselves, as their definitions are not clearly demarcated from one another. While the definitions of permanence and remainder are seemingly distinct, the actual results, that is to say the

relative permanence and remainder of the sign, exist in a state in which it is impossible to distinguish one from the other. Any attempt to define one term ultimately overruns into the other; it overflows attempts to demarcate and define the them. This comes back to the key argument of this chapter, that the instability of the binary is an unavoidable and necessary tension. This is evident through the metaphor of the shoreline; it is temporal and ephemeral, never fixed.

The tension of the *remains*, through the deconstruction of the temporal movement of the sign to the selfsame sign, blurs the boundary between the sign and the language slope in which it is intended to be used. As the sign can be used in both slopes, indeed simultaneously, the *remains* renders any distinction of the sign as in one slope or the other void. This is especially important during the act of translation, as the temporality of the *remains* and the sign deconstructs the binary between translatable and untranslatable. Derrida writes:

It is not untranslatable, but, without being opaque, it presents at every turn, I know, something to stop [*arrêter*] the translator: it forces the translator to transform the language into which he is translating or the ‘receiver medium,’ to deform the initial contract, itself in constant deformation, in the language of the other. I anticipated this difficulty of translation, if only up to a certain point, but I did not calculate it or deliberately increase it. I just did nothing to avoid it. On the contrary, I shall try here, in this short steno-telegraphic band, for the greatest translatability possible (Derrida 2004a, 71-72)

As Derrida begins to compose this message, running beneath a text that seeks to resist translation, he is also aware of the difficulty of succeeding, the difficulty of any message to be easily and definitively translated. While there is a shore from which we approach the text, there is always a submersion of certain parts of the text, disrupting the concept of a clearly defined shoreline that translation requires in order to be judged complete. This necessary tension between translatability and untranslatability, the tension that comes from a text being unable to be either one, is echoed in the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter. Once more, it is the tension of the *remains* that facilitates translation through both the permanence of the sign that allows for it to be understood and the remainder that resists this attempt to understand it and allows the text to survive.

The issue of translatability, in the blurring and tension between the binary, is continued in *Cinders*. Once more, Derrida divides the text into two seemingly opposing

columns. The left-hand page is constituted by the writing or discourse that would be called *Cinders*, as it contains Derrida's prose and argument. On the right-hand page is a separate text, or rather a collection of texts, as it is entirely composed of citations from Derrida's earlier writings (Allen 1993, 3). The tension in *Cinders* manifests from the location of the signature and, with it, the concept of the author. As explored previously, Derrida distances himself from his own work throughout *Cinders*. Referring to himself throughout as 'he' (Derrida 1991, 41), as if the author is someone other than himself, Derrida reiterates the argument he makes throughout *Limited Inc.*: the author who writes always does so for someone absent. If the author who reads their work by necessity does so in a different context than that of when he or she authored the message, then he or she cannot be understood as exactly the same person as they were when they wrote it. This has the effect of opening the iterability of language and context even in the face of the author; even the creator of the message cannot recover the full sign (Rapaport 1994, 235). Even the signature falls back upon this instability, this inability to ever recover the full permanence of the sign. As soon as the signature functions as such, which is as soon as it is recognisable as a sign that stands in for the author, it too finds itself unable to be completely grasped. This is why the interior/exterior nature of the signature finds itself falling back on the divide between permanence and remainder; the tension over the location of the signature ultimately comes from the question that arises as to whether the signature can ever belong to the author once it enters language and becomes ungraspable.

The signature fluctuates between the permanence of the writer in that there was a person who authored the message and the remainder effects that haunt all language and signs, thus allowing for repetition outside the original context. This is not only true of the signature, but also of the proper name, that which the signature also takes the place of. Earlier in this chapter, I explained the manner in which Derrida examines the act of naming in relation to the Tower of Babel. The act of naming, whether it be of a person or an object, falls back upon the issues of language that are true of all signs. When Derrida highlights how God names himself Babel, confusion, he reveals the movement that occurs during all naming; there is nothing special in a proper name that separates it from any other noun. Babel becomes both the name of God and confusion, neither only one nor the other; it is this very confusion that leads to the requirement of translation, yet complete transparency or translatability is impossible, as Derrida writes in the epigraph at the beginning of this

chapter. The *remains* disrupts the permanence of the proper name as effectively as it does all other language (Rapaport 2003, 91-92).

However, this debate over the location of the signature, or indeed over the author himself or herself, also connects to the definitions of the *remains*, notably the *remains* as corpus. The fear that Derrida describes in the face of others, the notion of his work being passed over to be consumed as inheritance, develops from this dual nature of the signature as it straddles presence and absence. The author is both present in the signature, as it is his or her own mark, yet also absent as they relinquish control over the future of the signature, the possible ways it will be received. Thus, the inheritance of the *remains* is also one of part ownership, or between presence and absence. Not only does the reader have the possibility of receiving the signature in any way they wish, but they also do so in the knowledge that they will and must be absent in future contexts in which the signature is received. Thus, the signature operates through the trace of the *remains* in the same manner as all signs, in that it refers both to its past as it is received into the future.

This connection between the signature and the *remains* has a significant conclusion, however. In the same way that the signature belongs both to the interior and exterior of the text, as it is both inside and yet outside of it, so too is the *remains* both inside and outside the sign. As the signature functions like all signs, as argued above and earlier in regards to the use of Bavel, then the link between the signature and the *remains* must exist between the *remains* and all other signs. Thus, the tension between permanence and the remainder that exists in the signature, one that develops from the dual nature of its interiority/exteriority, is true in all other signs. In the same manner that Derrida finds it problematic to argue that the signature is either interior or exterior, thus do I argue in regards to the *remains*. The consequence of this is pivotal to my later work in regards to translation. As the *remains* is both of the sign and outside of it, what actually falls back as a remainder from the reading will be a partial reflection or marker of both the sign and the context in which it was received. While this will be explored further in the following chapter and conclusion of this thesis, it is still important to note the importance of this development in our understanding of the *remains*. It is now no longer a matter of the *remains* as a trace between the sign and the self-same sign; rather, it is a trace between the sign, the self-same sign and the differing contexts in which the sign is produced.

Moreover, the meaning of the sign is thus produced through the same tension between permanence and remainder as is the case with the signature. This also refers back to the work of the previous chapter, specifically in regards to the link between *différance* and the *remains*. While the argument that the meaning of the sign does not reside in the sign itself is nothing new, as not only was this argued against in the opening chapter, it was developed further through an examination of the *différance* in the previous chapter. However, understanding the *remains* as both inside and outside the sign has ramifications for translation and the concept of a remainder through how it relates to ethics. Before exploring this further, I will return once more to the tension between permanence and the remainder and the manner in which it facilitates survival.

As stated at the beginning of the chapter, my aim is not to highlight that there is tension in the binary, rather, to emphasise that this tension is a necessary part of the creation of meaning through reading. The *remains* is not the mark of a kind of impotence in reading, one that would suggest that all attempts to translate are destined to fail. Rather, the *remains* manifests as the very call to translate or read in the first place, as will be argued further in the next chapter when I explore the final movement of deconstruction. However, the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter highlights this demand from the *remains*. From the moment Derrida argues on the necessity of a text or sign to live on, to survive any one reading or translation, he invokes the *remains*. The sign must be capable of being read, it must have permanence, yet it must also have a remnant that escapes it and is thus absent, a remainder. It is important to note that Derrida understands this dual necessity, not as complicating translation or rendering all meaning incomplete. Rather, it is from this necessity that he understands the survival of the text and, through this survival, the texts continued capacity to produce new meanings from new contexts.

The concept of something left behind through the act of translation is not unique to Derrida, for as argued previously Benjamin also postulates that there is a remainder left behind, but, for Benjamin, this remnant is evidence of pure language. While this understanding of what resists translation is different from Derrida's, it does provide a strong starting point for the second part of the argument due to the manner in which Benjamin focuses on the tension between languages as crucial to the creation of pure language. For Benjamin, translation does not reproduce the original; it allows the language of the original to grow into something larger. The two languages, the two pieces of the pure language amphora, combine into a larger piece, a larger tongue, despite being seemingly disparate.

As they coalesce, they are both altered and seen to grow through the act of translation. While Benjamin's notion of pure language is different to the *remains*, as will be argued shortly, how Benjamin writes of the growth of language through the act of translation, through the repetition and alteration of the sign, is similar to my argument of the necessity of the *remains*. The manner in which translation requires the original yet also requires the sign to be repeated and altered is similar to the tension between permanence and the remainder, insofar as that tension also relies upon the sign changing in light of its essential iterability.

Derrida refers to the dual growth in Benjamin's work as "the translation contract: hymen or marriage contract with the promise to produce a child whose seed will give rise to history and growth" (Derrida 2002a, 123). This promise produces a place, which Derrida refers to as a 'kingdom', where the sacred and the 'being-to-be-translated' meet and produce each other (Derrida 2002a, 123). The sacred text, seen by Benjamin as the ideal or prototype of translation, in addition to the being-to-be-translated, cannot be thought of without the other, they cannot 'be' without the potential for this kingdom. Derrida explains these kingdoms:

...never reached, touched, trodden by translation. There is something untouchable, and in this sense the reconciliation is only promised. But a promise is not nothing, it is not simply marked by what it lacks to be fulfilled. As a promise, translation is already an event, and the decisive signature of a contract. Whether or not it is honoured does not prevent the commitment from taking place and from bequeathing its record (Derrida 2002a, 123).

These unreachable kingdoms, these unreachable *remains*, are what drives the translator. In a similar divide to that of Blanchot's slopes, Derrida sees two aspects to Benjamin's translation theory: the transmittable and the remainder. In a similar manner to how Blanchot argues that the demand of the Work leads the author to write the text, for Benjamin, it is the desire to reach the untouchable that leads the translator to translate. Derrida writes: 'He [the translator] wants to touch the untouchable, that which remains of the text when one has extracted from it the communicable meaning, when one has transmitted that which can be transmitted' (Derrida 2002a, 124). Turning back to the metaphor of a fruit explored previously, Benjamin describes a 'core' of the original, a core that remains after the flesh of the fruit is gone. It is this same core that envelops itself in the skin and flesh of the new

translation. It is this core that attracts the new translation, and this core that holds the flesh and skin of the new translation together (Derrida 2002a).

As explained previously, this theory of a core is problematic as it falls back upon an understanding of language, much like that practiced by theorists explored in the opening chapter. Consequently, the same problems that Derrida identifies in the work of Austin and Searle begin to surface here, despite the earlier similarities I noted between Benjamin and Derrida. By differentiating between a core meaning and a skin of language, Benjamin is distinguishing between the everyday languages of today and the pure language he sees as the aim of all translation. In doing so Benjamin is creating a divide between the language of communication, the skin, and the language of meaning, the core. By focusing on the idea of a core of the text, Benjamin is falling into the logocentrism that Derrida explores throughout most of his works.

Benjamin states that translation allows for the ‘holy growth of languages’ (Benjamin 1999), which is why the sacred text is so important for him. Seen as a site of pure transferability, the sacred marks the ideal starting point from which to measure all translation. The sacred announces itself as immediately transferable, yet not necessarily translatable, as the two are not reducible to each other. Derrida explains this when he writes: ‘the pure transferable can announce itself, give itself, present itself, let itself be translated as untranslatable’ (Derrida 2002a, 132). Benjamin argues that an untouchable core resides in every original text, an untouchable part that beckons the translator in, presents itself as the pure transferable. However, while it can be transferred and wear the folds of another translation, the core is not translatable itself. It is at this moment that one of the critical differences between Derrida and Benjamin is evident. While Derrida identifies the existence of a remainder that must resist any reading or translation, this remainder is not an ideal or unique part of the text that remains untranslatable for all readers, as it is for Benjamin through his understanding of pure language. There is a temptation to equate Benjamin’s notion of the core of a text to the way Derrida’s uses ‘the crypt’, or archive, but this is to simplify the nature of the *remains*, as explored in the first chapter. The *remains* is not an *a priori* concept that can never be realised, as this would reduce the *remains* to an ideal part of the text or see it as that which makes a text *a text*. This distinction between Derrida and Benjamin in the way they understand what is left behind is evident in the manner in which Derrida distinguishes between the *remains*, as quasi-transcendental, and the remainder effects as the physical result. While the *remains* is always present, the

remainder effects that manifest as a result of it are unique to every reading and context. Whereas for Benjamin the remainder of pure language is always the same as it always must point back towards the same ideal language.

The binary between the translatable and the untranslatable reveals that translation is the enacting of choices, and it is in these options confronting the translator that the text both lives and dies. Focusing on the choice and decision at the heart of Blanchot's novel, *Death Sentence*, Derrida relates the work of translation to one of life and death. The translator, through his or her decisions to use certain words to express an idea, bestows a death sentence on that idea, as we saw earlier in Blanchot. There is always some part of the text, however, some part of the original words that escapes the translators' attentions and lives on, a remnant of the text. Derrida explains: 'This translation, like any other, leaves something out, an untranslated remnant (Derrida 2004a, 94). Any attempt to see in this quote an idea of nihilism of futility around the act of reading and translating is problematised by what Derrida writes directly above it:

But in the same way, linked to what is untranslatable in a language, this decision becomes *unreadable*. I maintain that this title is unreadable. If reading means making accessible a meaning that can be transmitted as such, in its own unequivocal, translatable identity, then this title is unreadable. But this unreadability does not arrest reading, does not leave it paralysed in the face of an opaque surface: rather, it starts reading and writing and translation moving again. The unreadable is not the opposite of the readable but rather the ridge [*arête*] that also gives it momentum, movement, sets it in motion (Derrida 2004a, 95-96).

The tension in language, that between permanence and the remainder, does not render language void or incomplete. Rather, it creates the need for a decision, a decision that comes from the untranslatable or unreadable in language. The language used in this passage is similar to that used by Caputo to describe undecidables as quoted in the first chapter, which he notes as being taken 'to mean a pathetic state of apathy, the inability to act, paralyzed by the play of signifiers that dance before our eyes, like a deer caught in a headlight' (Caputo 2004, 137). Just as the undecidable is not the opposite of decision, rather it is the very possibility of decision, so is the tension of the *remains* not the opposite of meaning, rather it is the very condition that there is meaning at all.

It is at this moment that the importance of the unreadable (in the form of the *remains*) to translation becomes clear. The decisions of the translator, as he or she

determines that a word will mean or refer to a certain idea or object and thus attempts to limit the sign to this sole meaning, fails to account for the unreadable part that falls back as a remainder. Thus, this account ignores the unrecognised meanings that survive to 'live on' inside the text. This is not to say that all readings or translations produce a similar amount of unreadable remnants, the parts that remain in the text. Nor am I suggesting that there is no way of understanding the possibility of one translation to be better than another in explaining a certain idea to a particular context of readers. Derrida reflects on this throughout his texts that engage with translation such as 'What is a Relevant Translation', as explored in the first chapter, and 'Living On/Borderlines' when he states that:

If there is something that arrests translation, this limit is not due to some essential indissociability of meaning and language, of signified and signifier, as they say. It is a matter of *economy* (economy, of course, remains to be *thought*) and retains an essential relationship with time, space, counting words, signs, *marks*... For example, with more words or parts of words the translator will triumph more easily over *arrête* in *arête de mort*. Not without something left over, of course, but more or less easily, strictly, closely, tightly (Derrida 2004a, 136-137).

This link between economy and translation was explored in the first chapter, where I demonstrated the two demands of economy, those of quality and quantity. The demands of economy manifest as a decision over what will make the best relevant translation. The limit comes as a result of this need to make a decision, as it is through this encounter with the demands of economy that the ambivalence and tension of language is revealed. More importantly, this movement that arrests translation is the very tension between permanence and the remainder, the very tension of the *remains*, as Derrida argues that there is always something left over, something that is not grasped.

As I argued earlier in the chapter, the *remains* exists both inside and outside the sign itself. This develops upon the definitions examined in the second chapter. Not only is this the case for the body, insofar as the *remains* of the body are both inside the body itself (as the actual corpse) and outside (as the markers, monuments and eulogies we use to mourn and remember), it is also the case with the corpus (as seen in the signature). However, one of the most pivotal consequences occurs in regards to the third definition, the *remains* as cinder. As I briefly touched upon earlier, the trace of the cinder no longer refers to the relation between the sign and the self-same sign, rather it now also traces the differing contexts in which the sign is received. While this is understanding of the meaning of a sign

is deconstructed and explored by other of Derrida's quasi-transcendentals, most notably iterability and *différance*, there is an important connection at work between the *remains* and translation where this understanding of the sign is particularly relevant. Specifically, the role of ethics and hospitality in translation theory reveals a new way of understanding the concept of the remainder. In order to explore this further, the following chapter will explore the work of Derrida and Ricoeur and their respective theories of ethics, hospitality and translation.

Chapter 5 – The *Remains* as Ethical Trace: Forgetting and Remembering Translation as *Remains*

It is a way for Derrida to show how an “appropriate” translation, a translation that aims at being “clear and natural in expression,” in other words a “naturalizing” translation, can be indeed deceiving. Exactly like Portia’s monologue, which seemingly composes a sublime praise of mercy, in fact hides a *merciless* ruse resulting in – is it necessary to recall it? – the forced conversion of Shylock, Derrida discloses here, through his proposed translation of Portia’s words, that the most “relevant” translation (which is also a *conversion* – from one language to another), the most “appropriate” – and consequently “appropriating” – translation is not devoid of violence which, for all its dissimulating itself, is nevertheless quite brutal: violence against the other’s language in a process of domestication, violence against the foreign language, reduced, without any apparent remainder, to one’s own language (Ertel 2009, 15-16).

The impurity in language (and not just differences between languages) is important here, because it implies an unstable element or an untranslatability within every language that makes ‘successful translation’ impossible. This is an impossibility then not only between languages but within language, at the heart of meaning. Yet, if we want to continue to live together in community and not give up on the possibility of communication, the act of translation becomes necessary. Thus we are caught in a ‘double bind’ where the untranslatable is the possibility that makes translation both impossible and necessary (Bergdahl 2009, 36)

The previous chapters developed an understanding of the *remains*, specifically the manner in which it works to deconstruct the binary of presence and absence. I demonstrated how this disruption of the binary provides a necessary tension for both the sign and the text. Indeed, most significantly, the chapters examined the connections between the *remains* and the issues of presence and absence at play in the survival of a text or sign. While there are many similarities between the *remains* and Derrida’s other quasi-transcendentals, such as *différance* and iterability, there are distinct differences, namely in the way I understand the *remains* as the trace between the sign and itself through the various readings and translations of the text. It is these differences that allow me to address the final concern of this thesis; that is, how can an understanding of the *remains* alter and ultimately shape the way we think and act about translation? As the first chapter revealed, the binary of presence and absence in translation is deconstructed and called into question through the movement

of *différance* and Derrida's understanding of decision. The inevitable question becomes, in what ways does the *remains* add to this deconstruction? As I will attempt to demonstrate, the importance of the *remains* is not due to the deconstruction of presence or absence per se; rather, it is important through the way in which it opens up and problematises the relation between the sign and its iterations. This is of special concern to translation, given that translation is primarily focused on the relationship between the original text and the translated version, as outlined earlier.

However, as explored previously the *remains* does not simply challenge or question the binary of original sign and translated version, as this would be simply replicate the work of the supplement. Rather, the *remains* opens a way of understanding translation as an act in which the decisions of the translator can be traced through the various 'remainder effects'. I am not suggesting that these traces can be read as a complete text, for that would attribute a complete presence to them. Rather, that some consequences of the decisions made by the translator will be evident in the translation itself, especially when compared to other translations of the same text. Given that translation is generally understood as an encounter with the foreign (in the form of the text, language or author as demonstrated throughout the first chapter), the remainder effects become a trace of decisions made in the face of the other as foreign. This is why I will go on to characterise the *remains* as an ethical trace.

The epigraphs cited above outline exactly what is at stake in the argument of the *remains* as a kind of ethical trace, or a trace of what can be understood as ethical decisions. The first epigraph reveals that the violence inherent in language is also at work in translation. This violence can take the form explored in Blanchot's slopes, which is the violence of the sign through the way it negates the object through the sign. However, there is also the violence in language that is caused by ethical and political demands. That is to say, if language is a cultural artefact, insofar as it is used to mark and demarcate boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in language, then there is a kind of inherent violence, one that Derrida explores in texts such as *Monolingualism of the Other* (1998) and *Ear of the Other* (1985). Translation, through the aim of a 'relevant' or 'appropriate' level of equivalence, is the site where violence between cultures is played out. This violence is not merely the violence of the sign to the object; it is now the violence done to the other, done to the other's language and mode of expression.

The second epigraph reiterates a theme that has been consistently explored throughout the thesis, namely the double bind of the text as both translatable and untranslatable. It is important to note that this argument of the untranslatable that pulls the translator on to further translate is not unique to a Derridean position, For, as cited earlier in this thesis, Barbara Cassin posits that the ‘untranslatable’ signs in philosophy, in particular, are why we can never be done with translation (Apter 2014, vii). However, the epigraph in question is important in that it also introduces two issues that are key to the argument of this chapter: first, that this impossibility is at the heart of meaning and second, that a desire to overcome this impossibility emerges as a consequence of the desire to belong to a community. This belief of community links back to the ethical demand of the first epigraph, yet it is also disrupted through the impossibility of a perfect copy in translation. The violence of language fails to capture the sign in translation completely. Thus, any community that is based on this desire to limit or fix meaning in communication is also, in a way, incomplete. Hence, there is a tension between the individual and the collective, a tension between that which is singular or unique to the text or sign and the general laws and context of the community that wishes to express or interpret the sign itself (Davis 2001, 93). This tension will be explored later in this chapter, in particular, the impact it has on how we view and understand the binary of possible and impossible in translation.

Before I can explore the work of mourning and translation, specifically through the connection between the *remains* and mourning outlined in the second chapter, I will initially turn to Ricoeur’s work on translation and hospitality towards that which is foreign. While there are significant differences between Derrida and Ricoeur, particularly about forgiveness and the relation between the self and other, there is a crucial similarity in their descriptions in relation to the necessary impossibility of complete translatability of the sign or text. The manner in which Ricoeur moves from this impossibility to an ethical encounter reveals a way of reconciling the deconstruction of translation explored previously with an understanding of an ethical encounter of the foreign in the text. Specifically, the benefit of comparing the work of Ricoeur with Derrida in order to develop upon the understanding of the *remains*, allows for a way of moving beyond a position of translation as both possible and impossible, and develop this towards an argument that shows this impossibility as a drive towards the need to further translate. Moreover, Ricoeur offers a path to follow in regards to understanding translation as a decision that can be understood to have an ethical imperative. However, this is not an ethical decision in that a certain choice is correct or

understood as more ethical; rather, it is that it is a true decision, understood against the notion of undecidability explored in the opening chapter, and thus it can lead to a kind of ethical choice.

I am not proposing that this encounter is the only way of understanding a kind of ethics at work in the deconstruction of translation. Indeed, Pym (2001) outlines numerous ethical encounters during the act of translation, from the notion of fidelity to the original (which I have explored throughout this thesis), to an ethical imperative on the contract between client and translator, and the impact that contract has on the act of translation, to name but a few. Each of these different forms of possible ethical encounters or choices could also produce a difference in the translation, as they would be part of the context in which the translator performs the act of translation. Despite this, my choice to explore the role of decision between the foreign and the same, in how to treat both the text and the reader, is important when one considers the lens of the possible and impossible in translation. These other forms or questions that could be considered ethical would not be considered as blocks against the possibility of translation itself; rather, they would be seen as potential reasons for the outcome of the translation itself. The relationship the translator has with the client, the role of the publisher, the mercantile interests at play in publishing can and do impact the translation but, fundamentally, the choice between the target and source language and the reader and the text is at the heart of the act of translation itself. This is an important distinction to make, and this is where my thesis diverges from what has been explored previously, in how I argue that the *remains* reveals the impossibility of perfect translation, not as an unfortunate or problematic situation, but rather as a reason to continue to translate.

This chapter will explain these issues by first exploring Ricoeur's work on translation, specifically that which he terms 'linguistic hospitality,' and how this relates to his understanding of history as a collective narrative as well as his concept of forgiveness, before turning to the similarities and differences between Derrida and Ricoeur's ethics and how this and Nicole Anderson's work on the conflicting ethical demands of the singular and the universal has implications for the *remains* and translation.

Ricoeur's Linguistic Hospitality

In a similar manner to Derrida, Ricoeur engages with translation through the binary of translatability and untranslatability, arguing that the translator encounters an initial presumption of untranslatability (Ricoeur 2006, 5). He describes this encounter in terms of a resistance to translation on the part of the original text, writing:

the foreign text towers up like a lifeless block to translation. To some extent, this initial presumption [of non-translatability] is only a fantasy nourished by the banal admission that the original will not be duplicated by another original.... But a fantasy of perfect translation takes over from this banal dream of the duplicated original. It reaches its peak in the fear that, being translation, the translation will only be bad translation, by definition as it were (*ibid*, 5).

The language used by Ricoeur in this passage bears many similarities to Derrida's discussion of origin referred to in the first chapter. Most significantly, his description of a position that understands translation as a bad duplication reflects the concept of the original as pure. For Ricoeur, the presumption of untranslatability develops not from an understanding of the act of translation itself but through the 'fantasy of perfect translation.' It is important to note that for Ricoeur translation is not impossible; rather, it is only impossible under a theory of translation that aspires to an exact copy or replica. This distinction is important, for Ricoeur's theory of translation is one in which the exact copy is not a positive but rather a homogenising and unethical conclusion.

Before turning to the ethical implications inherent in Ricoeur's divide between perfect and imperfect translation, it is important to begin by outlining how he understands the act of translation. There is a certain positivity in Ricoeur's theory, one that is not manifested as a possibility for a complete or perfect translation. Indeed, Ricoeur is very clear that there can be only an assumption of equivalence in translation, never a complete or perfect transference. Rather, the positivity I identify in Ricoeur's position develops from his understanding of a spirit of a culture or language and the way this manifests in both the text and the translation. Ricoeur's use of this 'spirit' further develops the work of the Hermeneutic theorists explored earlier in this thesis. Specifically, Ricoeur understands a spirit of language, arguing that the translator does not move from the word to the sentence to the text and finally context, but rather that the reverse is true; the translator begins with the spirit of the culture of the text (*ibid*, 31). This is why, for Ricoeur, there can be only

equivalence between languages; the signs used in different languages are not identical; thus, there can be no equivalent word choice (*ibid*, 34). Ricoeur's argument is not that translation is impossible; rather, that a theory of translation that aims for a certain level of equivalence or judges equivalence to be the deciding factor in the success of a translation is fundamentally flawed. This argument presents in a similar manner to that of Derrida's position regarding a relevant translation, as cited in the first chapter.

Consequently, Ricoeur is critical of the concept of deep structures or kernels that are common across all languages, the kind envisaged by Nida and the machine translators explored previously, as the spirit of the culture of the language precludes this kind of structural equivalence (*ibid*, 15-16). As opposed to equivalence through translation, the translator is faced with the task of salvaging meaning and accepting that there will be loss (*ibid*, 3). Despite this acceptance of loss, the use of a spirit of language and culture allows Ricoeur to view translation as as a positive act, an act of hospitality between cultures.

The movement of salvage and loss that Ricoeur associates with translation is tied to the work of psychoanalysis, as Alison Scott-Baumann explains:

The translator suffers through remembering the perfection of the original and through mourning the inevitable loss of the inimitable during translation. If I am translating I meet resistance from the text. Yet I remember that original perfect meaning and am thus plagued by remembering.... At this point, as in psychoanalysis, mourning inevitably takes place, as the translator mourns the inevitable loss of something during translation and accepts that in order to proceed there must be acknowledgement of deficiency (Scott-Baumann 2010, 73).

Beginning with the issue of an ideal origin, an underpinning of translation that was examined and questioned in the opening chapter, Scott-Baumann ultimately connects the ideal original with the act of mourning. Thus, translation can be perceived as similar to the *remains* as corpse, as something to mourn. Specifically, the translator must begin with this initial discovery of untranslatability and mourn the loss of that which escapes the translation in order that he or she can begin to translate. This untranslatability and thus need for mourning is unavoidable, according to Ricoeur, as the initial untranslatable movement comes from the inherent diversity of languages (Ricoeur 2006, 30; Scott-Baumann 2010, 79) that exists because the only universal in language is that all men speak (Ricoeur 2006, 12). Ricoeur notes, nonetheless, that the remembering and mourning he equates with both

Freud and translation (*ibid*, 8) forces the translator to give up on the goal of perfect translation between what are essentially diverse languages. Mourning what was lost and remembering the original is what drives the translator on to continue to translate.

In describing translation in terms of mourning and salvaging, Ricoeur uses language that shares many similarities with Derrida's understanding of the mourning of the *remains*. However, there are significant differences that arise out of Ricoeur's more positive interpretation. In writing of translation as impossible, Ricoeur then makes one of his most famous remarks:

...it is mourning for the absolute translation that produces the happiness associated with translating. The happiness associated with translating is a gain when, tied to the loss of the linguistic absolute, it acknowledges the difference between adequacy and equivalence, equivalence without adequacy.... In spite of the agonistics that make a drama of the translator's task, he can find his happiness in what I would like to call *linguistic hospitality* (Ricoeur 2006, 10).

It is here that Ricoeur's optimism is evident: that translation is impossible does not limit translation or render it inconsequential. Rather, it is this very impossibility that gives rise to what Ricoeur terms 'linguistic hospitality'; translation is only possible because it is not possible in a perfect sense. Linguistic hospitality gives rise to an ethical position (*ibid*, 23-24), which is why Scott-Baumann refers to translation as the ethical paradigm (2010, 71-72). It is significant that translation allows for the remembering of narratives through their re-telling and remembering (Hedley Clark 2010, 4-5) at the same time as it creates a framework for an ethical relation to what is foreign or other, specifically through the impossibility of the perfect translation (*ibid*, 10).

Despite the demand for hospitality, it must be noted that Ricoeur's ethical drive is not one that understands true translation (that is translation in which the original and the translation are identical) as possible. According to Ricoeur, translation is faced with the divide between the same and the foreign (2006, 4). This binary creates an ethical situation from the outset, as the issue of hospitality is brought to the fore not only through the welcoming of that which is foreign but also in the recognition that the translator's own language is also foreign to others. For Ricoeur, underpinning any theory that encourages an understanding of the growth of language, such as the hermeneutic position, is ultimately a position that seeks to culminate in a totalising project. In other words, perfect translation

or one that aims for growth seeks to find the most exact or appropriate way to express the world at the expense of others. This totalising occurs despite acknowledging the role of the foreign in translation:

the ambition of revealing the hidden face of the source language of the work to be translated and, *vice versa*, the ambition of de-provincialising the mother tongue, which is invited to think of itself as one language amongst others, ultimately to see itself as foreign (*ibid*, 8-9).

Ricoeur argues that this hermeneutic position of growth depends upon the possibility of a better or more pure language. This hermeneutic position requires the possibility of language growing through the act of translation, developing in some way in order to better express the meaning. The growth of language in this manner would conclude with the translator being made aware of his or her own language as being as inherently foreign as the one he or she is translating. That is to say, the translator would realise that their language is no more natural or correct than the one in which the text was originally written. To explain it another way, all languages are marginalised, as they are all equally foreign to other readers. Thus, all languages require to grow into a more perfect, more homogenous language that would speak for more people.

This marginalisation is similar to that I attributed to Benjamin earlier, because a pure language is understood as being preferable to the languages currently in use. However, Ricoeur warns against the totalising movement that is intrinsic to translation as growth or pure language, instead proposing that the impossibility of translation is key to hospitality. He further explains the importance of this impossibility of perfect transference (a position that sets him apart from the Hermeneutic theorists explored earlier, such as Benjamin) when he writes:

the dream of the perfect translation amounts to the wish that translation would gain, gain without losing. It is this very same gain without loss that we must mourn until we reach an acceptance of the impassable difference of the peculiar and the foreign. Recaptured universality would try to abolish the memory of the foreign.... Erasing its own history, the same universality would turn all who are foreign to it into language's stateless persons, exiles who would have given up the search for the asylum afforded by a language of reception. In brief, errant nomads (Ricoeur 2006, 9).

Reacting to Benjamin's appeal for a universal language or, at the very least, a universal understanding of intention, Ricoeur argues for a necessary otherness that escapes or resists

translation (*ibid*, 9). It is this otherness that halts perfect translation, yet it is also this otherness that is a requirement for his linguistic hospitality. He writes: ‘the pleasure of dwelling in the other’s language is balanced by the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home, in one’s own welcoming house’ (*ibid*, 10). Thus, translation is crucial to accepting the other, in allowing the other’s voice to be heard (Scott-Baumann 2010, 77), as it creates the connection between ethics and the past as well as between notions of pardon and empathy for the other (Kearney 2007, 157-158).

Despite giving rise to the ethical paradigm of linguistic hospitality, the impossibility of a perfect translation is a situation that leads to mourning, for Ricoeur. As translation is revealed to be impossible in a certain sense, for there is always something in the text that is untranslatable, it is a site of mourning that which is no longer present, much like the *remains*, yet also a site of memory for what is continued to be translated and forgetting that which is untranslatable. This connection between translation and memory develops due to Ricoeur’s theory of the link between the cultural narrative and memory. It is this connection between the past and ethics that is central to the importance of Ricoeur in my use of the *remains*. While there are many similarities between Ricoeur’s work and Derrida’s engagement with translation, such as that in relation to origin as noted previously, it is this connection that Ricoeur theorises between mourning the past and translation that is of particular importance to my work in exploring the *remains* as an ethical trace. In describing both memory and mourning in similar terms to those used to define his understanding of translation and the notion of untranslatability, Ricoeur reveals a framework that I argue creates a position that allows an understanding of the *remains* as a way of conceiving the past of the text through translation.

The connection between translation and mourning in Ricoeur’s work allows for a similar connection between translation and history. As the translator mourns for what they cannot salvage, translation is positioned as an integral part of the re-telling and survival of stories. Thus, there is a double-bind as translation is tasked to remember stories and allow for their re-telling at the very same moment that it prohibits this re-telling becoming a perfect copy of the original. Ricoeur argues that history is not objective or an *a priori* occurrence because it is not something that occurs irrespective of those who recall it. Rather, history is tied to memory, to a certain kind of memory that represents the events in the form of a coherent narrative. Jonathan Tran explains:

By demonstrating the configured nature of representation Paul Ricoeur elides the historiographic duality between fiction and history. Both, he shows, operate within the 'narrative field'. The past comes to the present through shared stories communities call 'memories'. Whatever the originary event in-itself is, or whether it is at all, matters less than how it gets carried forward through memory. In this sense, speaking of the past 'as past' gets ahead of itself since prior to memorisation it subsists inchoate and fragmented. Stories organise meaning from the bits and pieces that comprise pre-narrated memory (Tran 2009, 222).

The history or memory of the past is not an objective account or recollection of events. Rather, as Tran explains, this memory is already organised as a narrative. As such, in becoming a story that is passed down, memory becomes tied to translation, since it is through acts of translation that stories are retold. It is these stories and cultural aspects that Ricoeur refers to when he envisages the foreign or domestic aspects that are encountered in translation, as it is the stories shared by communities that continue as 'memories' (*ibid*, 223). David Kaplan explains: 'A narrative is like a long memory that orders and repeats sequences of events from beginning to end. With memory comes a retrieval of our past' (2003, 56). As such, for Ricoeur, any encounter with the past begins not with an understanding of history, but rather through memories (Hannoum 2005, 126-127). The connection between translation and memory, specifically through the re-telling of stories, has consequences for both forgiveness and decision. Ricoeur's understanding of forgiveness through memory and forgetting opens up a way of understanding translation with forgiveness; tasked with salvaging the past, the translator is faced with a decision as to what to remember and what to forget.

As with his argument that a universal language would inevitably homogenise that which is other, as evident in the quote cited above, Ricoeur is also careful to highlight that a complete or accurate memory would also be totalising, as it would imply that life is rational and is capable of being read as such with no remainder (Watkin 2009, 82). In order to escape the homogenisation of a universal or all-pervading memory, Ricoeur explains that forgetting is an essential part of memory; forgetting is integral to memory as it is a necessity for a way of forgiving. Both forgetting and forgiving are linked from the outset, for Ricoeur, as together, they 'designate the horizon of our entire investigation' (Ricoeur 2004, 412). There are two instances of forgiveness through forgetting for Ricoeur. First, that which he terms amnesty, which refers to enforced or 'institutionalised forms of forgetting', in which the state deems to pardon the past crimes of an individual or collective,

thus forcing the misdeed to be forgotten from the collective memory (*ibid*, 452). Ricoeur refers to this as an amnesty that aims for the ‘reconciliation of enemy citizens, civil peace’ (*ibid*, 453), but also runs contrary to the collective memory that ‘invests imagination with social responsibility, which is observable in calls to “never forget” or indictments of “never again”’ (Pickering and Keightley 2013, 123). Thus, this institutionalised amnesia takes great effort on the part of those who are charged with forgetting, so that reconciliation can take place (Hannoun 2005, 132-133).

However, in the second account of forgiving (which is a more general account as it explores the very possibility of forgiveness), Ricoeur concludes that: ‘Forgiveness – if it has a sense, and if it exists – constitutes the horizon common to memory, history and forgetting. Always in retreat, this horizon slips away from any grasp. It makes forgiving difficult: not easy but not impossible’ (Ricoeur 2004, 457). This second account marks the journey from the first account, that which Ricoeur refers to as ‘the regions furthest removed from selfhood (the juridical, the political, social morality’ (*ibid*, 458), towards the self-hood in which the forgiveness is a personal act, in which memory is part of us and therefore part of what makes are who we are (Pellauer 2007, 112). This second account directly impacts upon or returns to the self who forgives. Tran writes:

Forgiving and repentance both draw on the ‘original predisposition to good’ from whence agency gains power. The circle of forgiveness and repentance enacts native potencies that sometimes end in violation but more often spring from and toward goodness. Thus, at its heart the exchange of forgiveness and repentance has as its goal the restoration of the self. In seeking, receiving and giving repentance, the self comes home to restored possibility (Tran 2009, 224).

Ricoeur argues in this second account that we cannot forget if we are to forgive, we cannot become ignorant of what we are releasing or freeing. Rather, Ricoeur explains that in forgiveness, one must forget but not forget (Ricoeur 2004, 505), that is to say that the work of forgiveness must be connected to the work of memory and mourning (Clark 2010, 5). This link to memory and mourning has strong similarities to the accounts of the *remains* explored earlier.

This connection between the *remains* and Ricoeur’s account of repentance is further developed when Ricoeur writes of forgetting and forgiving, as he describes these movements through the language of the ‘trace’. Specifically, he refers to three types of

trace: the written, the psychical, and the cerebral or cortical (Ricoeur 2004, 415). Ricoeur notes that the archive is created to combat any attempt to efface the physical marks of these traces, which is why the last two traces, as less physical than the written trace, are crucial as the 'entire problematic of profound forgetting hinges on this articulation [between the psychical and cortical trace]' (*ibid*, 415). Abdelmajid Hannoun explains:

The issue of forgetfulness is played out on the juxtaposition of the second and the third types of traces. The second is related to the effacement of traces, a type of deep forgetfulness, the third is more hidden; one talks about them only retrospectively and in relation to specific experiences. Hence, these traces are not erased, but rather made inaccessible' (Hannoun 2005, 130).

In referring to the effacement of traces, Ricoeur seemingly posits that these traces can be removed completely from memory in the act of forgetting. However, according to Hannoun, this is not the case. As opposed to being erased, the traces themselves are no longer available; we can no longer follow them back to the memory. It is through this language of memory as the trace that one cannot follow that I wish to explore further in regard to Derrida's *remains*, specifically through the notion of the cinder as the trace.

Ricoeur's work reveals a way of understanding translation as not only a relation between the self and other, specifically the culture of the language of the self and the culture of the language of the other; it also opens up the possibility of understanding translation as a re-telling of a narrative of the past. This connection is central to an understanding of translation. As the previous chapters have demonstrated, what sets the *remains* apart from the other Derridean terms that inhabit the space in-between the binary of presence and absence is how the *remains* not only is the trace between the sign and itself; moreover, it is the understanding that it is a trace that can be identified through the remainder effects that are left behind. The iterability of the sign that allows the text to be read in different contexts also produces these remnants that one can trace. While Ricoeur's work on mourning the past and translation connects to his understanding of linguistic hospitality, his understanding of ethics differs from that of Derrida's. Thus, the *remains* is not only distinct from Derrida's other quasi-transcendentals, it also offers an alternate way of understanding the ethical movement of translation as similar to the understanding of the past. To explore this further, I will now compare Ricoeur and Derrida in order to outline both how these similarities between them allow for an understanding of the role between translation and

the past in deconstruction, but also how the differences reveal the importance of the ‘remains’ for translation theory

Hospitality and Translation in Derrida

Similar to Ricoeur’s understanding of the work of mourning and remembering in translation, I understand the *remains* as producing a gap or *aporia* between the notion of a perfect or pure translation and the actual translation produced. However, unlike Ricoeur, the *remains* is neither entirely positive nor negative. While the *remains* is the result of a decision, thus having ethical implications, it does not necessarily produce the ethical growth Ricoeur envisages. This ethical imperative for Ricoeur is evident as he moves away from the dichotomy of translatable/untranslatable towards one of faithfulness and betrayal (Ricoeur 2006, 14; Scott-Baumann 2010, 73). This use of ‘faithful and betrayal’ implies judgement – that it is possible to have readings or translations that are understood or adjudged as being more correct or more ethically valid. Indeed, the question becomes to whom is one being faithful or betraying, the text or the reader? Like Ricoeur, I argue that we must move beyond translatability and untranslatability. However, I propose instead that the remainder effects produced through translations as ways of viewing the decisions faced by the translators and the different ways of addressing these various and respective choices. I am not arguing against the possibility of this hospitality or ethical encounter; indeed, I will show Derrida is also concerned with the possibility or question of ethics and hospitality towards the other. However, I am questioning this understanding of an ethical paradigm that is so clearly defined that it can identify an ethical endpoint that translation drives towards in a kind of teleological movement that affirms the selfhood of the subject. This follows Lisa Foran’s conclusion that Ricoeur, despite writing of the need for an impossibility in translation, posits it as a necessity that should be worked through to bridge gaps and avoid isolation between cultures (Foran 2015, 37).

Before exploring the crucial differences between Derrida and Ricoeur in relation to ethics, it is important to highlight the important similarities to reveal why this earlier discussion of Ricoeur is relevant to my work on Derrida. The similarities are clear from the outset of a comparison between the two. Ricoeur presents a similar position to that advocated by Derrida about the politics of language and otherness, specifically in *Monolingualism of the Other* (1998a, 21), a similarity that also underscores a crucial argument I make in relation to the *remains*. It is through the impossibility of translation, in

the form of the disruption of the universality Ricoeur warns of above, that linguistic hospitality arises. Likewise, it is through the dismantling of the binary between presence and absence through the *remains* that leads to meaning. As the *remains* is also to be understood as disrupting translation theories, as evident in the first chapter, then it too can be conceived of as allowing for a kind or view of ethics as it disrupts an account of a universal language, albeit a different understanding of ethics.

As I touched upon earlier, there is a similarity between Ricoeur and Derrida in the way they understand the role of origin, specifically their respective critiques of a pure origin of the text that would homogenise or subsume other readings or encounters. This causes both Ricoeur and Derrida to move beyond a theory of translation that compares the level of fidelity between the translation and the original. Instead, they argue respectively for a necessary impossibility in order that there be an ethical encounter with both the source text and language as foreign or other. From this initial similarity springs a second, that the impossibility of a perfect translation is the very cause for or drive of translation itself. That is to say, it is the impossibility of creating a perfect translation that drives future translators to re-translate. As cited above, Ricoeur uses the understanding of both salvage and mourning to describe the act of translating and of narrativising memory. This is similar to Derrida's work, specifically his writing on Benjamin and Blanchot, as explored in the fourth chapter. For Derrida, the text lives on through the inability of a reader or translator to saturate the context and therefore limit the meaning of the sign to one dominant or correct meaning. As a consequence, Derrida uses the metaphor of a dredging machine to describe the act of reading, a metaphor that shares much with Ricoeur's use of salvaging. This use of salvaging and mourning reveals the role of decision in translation, as the translator is faced with choices, choices which have implications over what the translator can salvage and what will fall back as a remainder

There is also a significant similarity between Derrida and Ricoeur in their understanding of the impossibility of translation as allowing for ethics. Kathleen Davis explains the way in which deconstruction disrupts translation and introduces the notion of the ethical at the conclusion of her work *Deconstruction and Translation* (2001). Specifically, she describes how ethics in translation develops from a similar tension to that which I identify in Ricoeur, specifically developing as a response to or warning of the danger of homogenising the other through translation. However, Davis is careful to note

that this ethics or obligation is not one that exists before the translator or translation, insofar as the translator recognises an ethical situation that exists prior to the text. Rather:

When a translator, or translating culture, reaches to translate a ‘foreign’ text, both the translator and the foreign become co-defined; they do not, as such, pre-exist this gesture. Each initiating gesture, specific of course to its historical moment, designates identities (i.e., the text, the translator, language, culture, etc.) that emerge through exclusions. That which is excluded in order for these identities to emerge is the “wholly other”. The irreducibly foreign, then, does not lie waiting in the source text, but *becomes* with the concept of translation (Davis 2001, 106).

As opposed to existing prior to the act of translating, the binaries created through Western translation theory (such as domestic and foreign, original and translation) only appear at the moment translation is enacted. The relationship between the self and other in translation, a relationship that produces a certain kind or idea of ethics, is also not an origin that gives rise to translation, but rather is an issue from the moment translation occurs. There are several consequences to this, not least in the disruption to the concept of origin that I explored in the first chapter. However, Davis also introduces translation as a process of exclusion, an act that leads to that which is ‘irreducibly foreign’ or ‘wholly other.’ Similar to Ricoeur’s description of mourning for what is missed in translation, Davis outlines how deconstruction reveals that decision in translation leads to or stems from exclusion.

Davis notes that a responsible translation is one that seeks to respect its obligation to the ‘wholly other,’ thus resisting the totalising forces that would seek to undermine or homogenise the difference of the other (Davis 2001, 106). This use of responsible to describe a kind of translation is problematic, as it presumes that the other can be understood of as subsumed by the act of translation. However, as this thesis has argued throughout, there is not complete translation that can grasp the entirety of meaning and force it to present itself in a new language through the act of translation. However, the relation between translation and the other, in the form of that which is foreign, is why Davis argues that to ‘raise the question of “ethical translation” is, in a certain sense, redundant. Translation enacts the ethical relation, both despite and because of its own im/possibility’ (*ibid*, 93). Despite the use of responsible to describe some acts of translation, I agree with Davis at this point, as it is redundant and dangerous to think of ethical translation, as that would be to imply a kind of translation that is understood as unethical. Rather, translation,

by virtue of the decisions made in the face of what is inherently undecidable, already has a framework that leads to a kind of ethics. That is to say, the role of decision in translation requires some sort of sacrifice, that something be left in order that something be made. Thus, there is no translation in which there is not the possibility of ethics. This understanding of a kind of ethics in deconstruction is by no means limited to translation. For example, Anderson demonstrates how resistance to a totalising thought manifests in the ‘wholly other,’ again in the binary of possible and impossible. Anderson explains that possibility requires the impossible in order ‘to allow, and to prepare, for the event (unknowable future) as “wholly other”’ (Anderson 2012, 76). The impossible allows for an ethical possibility to escape what Anderson refers to as ‘absolute empiricism,’ towards multiple ethical events that are no longer ‘normatively governed’ (ibid, 77-78). She concludes:

Thus, if singular events are marked by the impossible, and if those singular events are produced by are produced by ethical possibilities, then the ethically normative contains the trace of impossibility. From this we can further deduce that ethical possibilities are marked by the trace of the impossible, making ethical possibility as quasi-transcendental (*ibid*, 78).

The possibility of an ethics begins from the necessity of the impossible; likewise, translation begins with the untranslatable. Ethics in translation develops from an initial position of the impossibility of translation. In raising the issue of the singular contrasted with a general ethics, one marked by normativity, Anderson introduces a pivotal argument, which I will go on to explore.

Differing Accounts of Hospitality and Forgiveness in Translation

The account of the other in Davis’s and Anderson’s work reveals a way of deconstructing translation in similar terms to that theorised by Ricoeur. Ricoeur himself does not deconstruct translation theory; rather, there is a commonality in the danger of a homogenising translation theory. As with Ricoeur, Derrida approaches the other in translation through an understanding of hospitality. This is evident in *Of Hospitality* where Derrida writes of the situation of the foreigner as one in which they have to ask for hospitality in a language that is not their own:

This personage imposes on him translation into their own language, and that's the first act of violence. That's where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the sense of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country? If he was already speaking our language, with all that implies, if we already shared everything that is shared with a language, would the foreigner still be a foreigner and could we speak of asylum or hospitality in regard to him? (Derrida 2000, 15-17).

Of note in this passage are two important concerns. First, the question of hospitality begins with translation as the site in which the self and the other come into contact. Second, the violence inherent in translation is one that is done to the other by the system of language itself, mirroring the concern raised by Derrida in *Monolingualism of the Other*, as previously discussed. Much like Ricoeur, Derrida argues that the other should not be homogenised in translation. Rather, there is a need for the foreigner to resist, to remain foreign as such, that there be hospitality at all. While this is similar to the theories of Ricoeur explored above, there is a crucial difference in how Ricoeur and Derrida account for this encounter with the other.

There is a significant parallel between Ricoeur and Derrida through Ricoeur's use of the term 'trace' to describe the movement of memory and forgetting. It is this point of similarity that I wish to use in order to follow Ricoeur's move from translation as hospitality to forgiveness in regards to Derrida's work and the *remains*. As cited above, Ricoeur writes of the trace of memory and history as one which becomes effaced through the act of forgiveness, that to forgive is essentially a form of forgetting, insofar as one no longer holds that memory to bear against the other. This effacement of the trace, specifically its removal of signs that would allow one to follow the memory back to its source completely, shares much in common with the cinder as a trace that I explored in the second chapter. As argued previously, the *remains* or cinder exists as a trace between the sign and a prior account of the self-same sign. This trace is not one that leads back to an origin, nor is it a trace between two differing objects. Rather, the *remains* is a trace that exists between differing temporal moments of the same sign. However, one cannot follow it back to an earlier form of the sign, if by that one means a pure or undamaged form, as it is not to be understood as a trail that one can follow in that way. There is a commonality between the way I understand the *remains* as a trace and the way Ricoeur uses it for his work on memory. For Ricoeur, these traces are part of the narrative of collective memory

and the representation of history (Harris 2012, 152) and are thus the trace of something that was. While the *remains* as cinder is a trace between instances of the same sign, and is thus a trace of translation, and this could be argued as similar to the trace of memory proposed by Ricoeur, I argue that these accounts are not synonymous.

Another significant point of difference between Ricoeur and Derrida is in the way they describe the encounter between the self and other. This is particularly evident in the way Ricoeur describes the act of forgiveness. Ricoeur and Derrida both engage with similar topics and with one another, so there is a dialogue between the two regarding the issues involved with forgiveness. As cited previously, Ricoeur concludes of forgiveness as an infinite horizon that is difficult but not impossible to achieve (2004, 457). This definition of difficult but not impossible is in opposition to Derrida's earlier argument regarding forgiveness, in which he states: 'forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable. One cannot, or should not, forgive; there is only forgiveness, if there is any, where there is the unforgivable. That is to say that forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself' (Derrida 2001, 32-33). This argument of the unforgivable in forgiveness shares much with the argument of the survival of the text in translation occurring due to the inherent untranslatability of the text. In that same way that future translations can only be understood as possible or necessary because of this untranslatability, forgiveness can only be seen as such when it is an inherently unforgivable act. Thus, for Derrida, the act of forgiveness is not in which the self has a say on whether or not forgiveness is achievable.

In a response to Ricoeur, Derrida notes that what is at stake in Ricoeur's argument is the very possibility of selfhood based on the notion of 'I can' (Derrida 2010, 168). That is, in defining forgiveness as difficult but ultimately possible, Ricoeur is affirming an understanding of selfhood that allows for an agency or active decision regarding forgiveness. Pirovolakis notes that this understanding of selfhood is contrary to Derrida's, writing:

for Derrida, it is always the other, be that other myself, who decides, forgives, or acts, a structure that, introducing an absolutely irreducible alterity into the heart of the experience of forgiveness, renders problematic its construal as activity or possibility, even a difficult one (2010, 2).

Thus, the key difference between Ricoeur and Derrida is Ricoeur's use of possibility and affirmation of the self in forgiveness.

As discussed above, Jonathan Tran describes how, in Ricoeur's theory of forgiveness and repentance, forgiveness is not offered in the hope that other will repent; rather, for Ricoeur, both originate in a 'predisposition to good' (Tran 2009, 224). Thus, forgiveness is done for the self as much for the other, as it is through the desire to do good that the self is made manifest. The agency that this presupposes, and agency on the part of the self in order that they can do acts such as to forgive and to give in general, reaffirms the 'I can', which is why Ricoeur's selfhood is understood as a 'hermeneutics of action' (Pirovolakis 2010, 97-98). Pirovolakis continues, arguing that Ricoeur's dialectics sublates the alterity of the other under an ethical selfhood (*ibid*, 116), one that comes from Ricoeur's understanding of mutuality as a form of reciprocity in which there is a shared understanding of what constitutes a 'good life' (*ibid* 108). Thus, Ricoeur's account of the relation between the self and other is one in which the actions of the self are solidified through his or her relation to that which is other.

Returning to Derrida's work, there are clear differences between his account of the relation between the self and other compared to that of Ricoeur. While Derrida also conceives of ethics as coming from the encounter with the other, rather than being defined in terms of the 'I can' of selfhood that Ricoeur describes, it instead finds the other as a moment of complete alterity. Where Ricoeur positioned the other in terms of decisions made by the self (that is, understanding to other through whether we have been good and had a just life, thus affirming the selfhood of the 'I'), Derrida finds the other as a site of an aporia. This is evident in the above quote from *Of Hospitality*, where he talks of hospitality in terms of allowing for the foreigner to stay foreign, that is, allowing the other to stay essentially unknowable (Derrida 2000, 15-17). This ties back to the accounts of violence in language through homogenisation, spoken of earlier. The other represents an undecidability, one that becomes linked with an ethical question: how do we translate that which is other while still respecting it as foreign?

Translation is inherently linked with ethics as it finds itself not only faced with a relation to that which is foreign, it finds this encounter as one in which we inevitably find the foreign as an aporia or undecidable. This is not to say that we cannot decide, indeed we cannot fail to make a decision in the face of the other; rather, this undecidable opens up the very possibility of decision as it removes any prescriptive or 'correct' choices. While Ricoeur falls back upon the understanding of a correct or good decision made in the face of the other, an understanding that allows for forgiveness, he thus sets up this forgiveness

as a prescriptive choice; to be ethical one must forgive. Derrida, however, maintains that this forgiveness is ultimately impossible (2001, 32-33); thus, the encounter with the other is removed from a simple ethical understanding. According to Anderson, it is this ‘ambiguity’ that is the very possibility of ethics, as she writes:

That is, *différance*, in opening up ‘possible’ responses away from prescriptive ones, produces potential uncertainty, and the moral dilemma endemic to ambiguity. Moreover, this ambiguity, generated by *différance*, and existing in the ‘between’ of all oppositions, transgressing (without transcending) by its very (*non*)structure, the reduction of ethical response to prescriptive and normative choices (Anderson 2012, 71).

Rather than leading to an absence of decision, Anderson highlights the importance of this ambiguity, this undecidable between the terms, to allowing for a true decision. Thus, as with the difference between forgiving, there is a crucial divide between Ricoeur and Derrida.

Despite any differences, the parallels in the use of key terms by Derrida and Ricoeur sets up the final argument of my thesis. While there are many similarities in their work, ones that can be explored through many of Derrida’s quasi-transcendentals, the use of the *remains* opens up a new avenue. Just as Ricoeur writes of the importance of the narrative to memory (memory is that which allows the narrative to be retold), so too do I argue that the *remains* opens a new link between the text and its translations. The trace of the cinder of the *remains* is not just that between temporal moments of the sign, it is also that between temporal moments of the text through its translations and re-readings. The remainders that escape the translation, the parts that exist in the system yet separate in the crypt or archive, these stop the complete translation of the text. Yet each time these remainders are different, in that each time there are different parts of the sign and text resist the translation. As Ricoeur mourns for the impossible translation as he conceives of the need for both memory and forgetting, so too do I envisage translation that mourns for the *remains* yet also consigns them to the memory and loss of the archive. The remnants that are left behind can be read as an ethical trace.

Throughout the previous chapters, I have outlined some of the ways in which the *remains* disrupts presence and absence, much like the disruption of presence outlined in the opening chapter in regards to decision. Here I discuss the importance of decision to translation, specifically the connection between decision and *remains*. The decisions made

by the translator that lead to the differing meanings, produced through the work of the *remains*, will leave different parts behind as remainders. While I am not arguing that these remainders can be read as a text, for that would be to inscribe a totalising system, which would be counter to my argument throughout this thesis. Rather, I am arguing that the *remains* instead reveals the ethical traces of the previous readings and translations that have come before. This different understanding of forgiveness and decision allows for a very different view of translation, one in which I argue the *remains* functions as a trace of the decisions made by the translator.

It is this idea of an ethical trace makes the *remains* so important to translation. Translation becomes a site of decisions, which ultimately leads to the work of mourning and memory discussed above. It is from the need to make truly responsible decisions, ones which are essentially impossible or undecidable, that translation can have an ethical relation to the others in translation. Specifically, the decisions made between the other of the book or text and the other of the reader. As I explained above, Kathleen Davis argues that the act of translation is violent since it can homogenise the other, as it seeks to take what is different, in a different language or from a different culture, and bring it into the language of the same. For Davis, this risk of homogenisation develops from the relation between the author/translator and the text. Arguing that the self or ‘subject’ only comes to be through the difference between the self and others, Davis concludes that responsibility is not the effect of the self behaving ethically towards a distinct or discrete other, rather: ‘it is a tie or obligation constituted in their emergence as “subject” and “other”’ (Davis 2001, 91). Like many of the other words and terms of Derrida’s, explored throughout this thesis, it is not the case of an either/or but rather a both/and. There is no possibility of a subject without an other, no way of defining one in isolation of the other. Thus, the subject is defined not only by what it is but also by what it is not; the act of translation requires *both* the subject *and* the other. This inherent connection between the self and the other in translation is why the issue of decision and the use and understanding of the undecidable become so important. If one followed a formula, in translation or indeed in making any decision (a formula such as word-for-word or sense-for-sense, for example), then the translator is already using someone else’s formula and thus the decision is “‘fixed” from the start’ (*ibid*, 95).

In order to have responsibility towards the other in translation, the decision needs to be unfixed and ultimately unknowable: an *aporia*. These *aporias* appear from the notion of borders in and between languages. Specifically, untranslatable words, those that appear

as an *aporia* and force the translator to make a responsible decision, come not from a border between languages but from a border inside the language itself (Davis 2001, 94). This is evident in words that function as contranymy or have pluralistic meanings. It is not a question of the word blocking smooth passage from one language to the next. Rather, even inside the same language system, the word disrupts attempts to limit its meaning, words such as *pharmakon*, for example, as will be examined further shortly. This is why theorists such as Peggy Kamuf refer to translation as a passage, such as in the passage used as an epigraph at the beginning of the first chapter (Kamuf 2010a, 64). Questioning the nature of translation as a passage, in which meanings are passengers on a ferry that disembark at the shore of the new language, Kamuf explores where the notion of an impasse in translation occurs (*ibid*, 64). As with Davis, Kamuf ultimately focuses on signs that are pluralist in their meaning, specifically *pharmakon*, concluding that even within the same language words like *pharmakon* become a scene for ‘interpretive translation’ (*ibid*, 66). This interpretive translation sets up the double bind of translation, one between the extremes of hospitality and being violent. To be hospitable in translation is to welcome the other into your language and thus to subsume the difference of the other. Whereas, to respect the individuality of the other, to be inhospitable, means not to translate, to reinforce and reinscribe the borders between languages and culture. Indeed, as Kamuf explains in regards to her own practice when translating Derrida, the ‘translator stomps all over the other’s idiom, necessarily – that is what is demanded and expected of a translation’ (Kamuf 2017, 232). To translate it to commit to an act of violence, as the only way to respect the foreign is not to translate it, to leave it on the other shore. That is the demand and expectation that Kamuf notes at the core of translation.

I conclude this chapter with an examination of Derrida’s understanding of ethics and law, specifically the tension Derrida creates between the singular and plural in ethics, as argued by Nicole Anderson (2012).

Ethics Under Erasure and the *Remains* as Ethical Trace

At the heart of Anderson’s work on Derrida’s ethics is the process that Derrida titles ‘under erasure,’ which is the act of writing a word and crossing it out. Anderson explains, ‘under erasure marks what is produced, that is, the old word and concepts and meanings that we inherit, without privileging the transformation that occurs in the process of putting under erasure’ (Anderson 2010, 93). Of particular importance to my argument is the way

Anderson connects under erasure to inheritance, while also describing a transformation that does not deserve special attention as such. If we apply this to the act of translation, Derrida's understanding of under erasure offers a way of considering both the original text and its translation but without any positive or negative associations placed upon either due to the act of translation. That is to say, under erasure opens a way of considering both the text and its translation without using terms such as relevant or faithful to judge and define the translation. Instead, as I will argue in this final section, translation under erasure becomes a way of viewing the act of translation as one between the singularity of the text and the universality or normativity of the culture and language in which it is to be translated. In order to explain this further, as well as to explain how this relates to ethics, I will explain Anderson's argument in more detail.

In engaging with under erasure, Anderson highlights the role of decision in ethics, particularly the understanding of undecidability. As argued previously, undecidability is not the opposite of decision. As Anderson explains, it is not an 'absence of decision', rather it is the 'undecidable moment' that means 'any possible decision can occur' (2010, 40). Indeed, undecidability 'haunts' decisions (*ibid*, 41), in a way that exists not as a presence in itself, but neither as complete absence. This haunting of decision reveals the iterability at the heart of all signs, as all decisions of meaning in reading or translation are haunted by the possibilities of other readings that have come or remain as a reading to come. In haunting decision, Anderson argues that undecidability 'allows for every decision to be singular.... Undecidability, that which makes the decision singular, contaminates the generality that is characteristic of the very decision' (*ibid*, 80). Thus, for Anderson and Derrida, rather than removing the process or importance of decision, it is undecidability that ensures that a decision can be understood as a singular decision or a decision towards a singular person or event. It is this call of the singular that demands we take responsibility, a demand for an ethical imperative, as Anderson explains:

"reckoning with" [our spectres or inheritance] not only calls for responsibility towards our inheritances, our spectres, but also the reckoning itself *is* a form of responsibility. And this is because it requires a negotiation with an ethical inheritance that has to account for difference and sameness; a negotiation between ethical universality (normativity) and particularity (singularity) (*ibid*, 92)

As with Derrida's account of hospitality and translation cited earlier, once more, there is a binary between difference and sameness, between the sameness of the self and the

difference of the other. More significantly, however, this binary again uses similar terminology to that of the *remains*. Responsibility towards the other involves not only the concept of inheritance, a significant part of the *remains* as corpus, it also involves the spectre of the corpse and cinder.

Derrida explains the ramifications of negotiating the demands of the singular other and universal ethics in his reading of the story of Abraham and Isaac. Recalling the story of God's request to Abraham that he sacrifice his son on the top of Mount Moriah, Derrida explores Abrahams decision: does he obey the demands of God, the singular, or obey the laws of his people, the universal law that states 'thou shall not kill'. Finding Abraham caught between these two conflicting demands, Derrida concludes that the other calls us to duty and obligation, explaining that 'I am responsible before the other as other' (2008, 68). However, in being responsible for the other Derrida argues we are also, simultaneously, irresponsible to all others. He concludes with what is now a famous remark about ethics and responsibility, writing:

I cannot respond to the call, the request, the obligation, or even the love of another with sacrificing the other other, the other others. *Every other (one) is every (bit) other [tout autre est tout autre]*; everyone else is completely or wholly other.... As soon as I enter into a relation with the other, I know I can respond only by sacrificing ethics, that is to say by sacrificing whatever obliges me to respond, in the same way, in the same instant, to all others. I put to death, I betray and lie, I don't need to raise my knife over my son on Mount Moriah for that (*ibid*, 69).

In this analogy of the story of Abraham, Derrida argues that any act of ethics, any decision made for the other is simultaneously unethical for all others who we do not answer, whose demands we do not meet. In the context of translation, this passage raises two significant issues. First, in relation to the text itself and the potential reader or language system, Abraham is torn between the ethics of his people and remaining ethical to his singular god (Reynolds 2004, 49), translation is caught between the demands of the readers and remaining ethical and responsible towards the text. The translator is faced with a decision between sacrificing the text in order to render it intelligible by the reader or sacrifice the demands of the reader in order to keep the text intact. This dual demand is played out in some of the significant debates across Western translation history.

This first issue of the text and reader leads into the second issue, raised by Kamuf at the end of the previous section. The need to sacrifice one to save another is also evident in the double bind between hospitality and protecting the other. As with the demands of both the reader and the text, there is a decision facing the translator over how to best be faithful and responsible to the other. As explained above, translation is connected to hospitality as it involves welcoming into our language the language of the other. However, translation is also inherently violent since an ideal or perfect translation would result in the complete homogenisation of all that is other. Thus, the translator is forced to make a decision about whether to sacrifice hospitality for the good of the other, or sacrifice the other in order to be hospitable. As Kamuf explains: ‘Is it more or less violent to appropriate the other in my language than to refrain from doing so out of respect, but also thereby to refuse every approach, every contact, every comparison—in short, every hospitality’ (Kamuf 2010a, 69). This issue of hospitality is lessened to a degree by the arguments of Derrida and Ricoeur over the impossibility of a perfect translation (and thus the impossibility of a complete homogenisation of the other). However, there is still an element of sacrifice that persists in translation, in that there is no universal ethics that would allow one to translate or not translate with equal impunity.

The lack of a universal code or ethics that would alleviate the issue of sacrifice develops from Derrida’s account of justice and law. Specifically, it connects to the manner in which Derrida describes the universal law as against or contrary to the notion of individual justice. As Derrida argues:

Law is not justice. Law is the element of calculation, and it is just that there be law, but justice is incalculable, it demands that one calculate with the incalculable; and aporetic experiences are the experiences, as improbable as they are necessary, of justice, that is to say moments in which the *decision* between just and unjust is never insured by a rule (Derrida 2002b, 244).

Akin to his argument in regards to hospitality, for Derrida, justice stems from what he terms an ‘aporetic experience,’ one in which one encounters a decision that is, at its heart, undecidable. That is why, to return to the double bind raised by Kamuf, the law of hospitality can never be seen as just in regards to the other in translation. To advocate as one method of translating, or not translating for that matter, as more ethical than an other, to posit a law of translation, does not do justice to the individual texts themselves.

This connection or binary between justice and law draws upon many of the key themes explored throughout this chapter and, indeed, the entire thesis. A law of translation, one that seeks to set in stone the best way to grasp the meaning of the text while being responsible to both text and language, would ultimately end in the dissolution of the other language and text itself. As shown previously, the survival of the text requires that the text be in some way untranslatable. Likewise, the survival of the other requires equal measures of hospitality and the concept of being inhospitable. Indeed, Kamuf argues that hospitality and translation are closely linked through this deconstruction of law and justice, writing:

Like and as hospitality, then, translation answers to limited and contingent laws—which is why, and this is all too obvious, its practices are neither historically nor socioculturally invariant. But also, and this may seem at first less obvious, it must answer to its singular and unyielding unconditional law: the impossibility of a faithfulness without reserve (Kamuf 2010a, 70).

While Kamuf raises an interesting concern because translation cannot be understood as invariant, it is important to note that the language Kamuf uses bears much in common with the issues of forgiveness, mourning and survival, as discussed previously. Thus, there is a confluence of the key concerns at this juncture, since translation, ethics and hospitality are all marked by impossibility. More significantly, they are marked by an impossibility that inevitably leads to mourning.

As I have argued throughout this chapter, translation is not only concerned with ethics; indeed, ethics lies as a fundamental issue in translation, it is also concerned with the act of mourning. In light of the previous chapters, it is evident that the *remains* can be understood through this notion of mourning what is left behind in translation or indeed, left behind in the decisions made in regards to hospitality. It would be easy to conclude from this that the *remains* is nothing more than another way of naming the double bind of decision: it demands a decision be made at the moment it renders a true decision essentially undecidable. However, the *remains* is more than this, though indeed it does share much with the issues of the double bind, along with the aforementioned connections with survival, iterability, and the ‘trace.’ In order to explore this further, especially with reference to Kamuf’s point about the inherent historical and social variance of translation, this thesis will conclude by returning back to the key concepts of Western translation theory explored in the opening chapter. This return to the earlier deconstruction will allow for the

remains to be situated amongst the work undertaken by other theorists previously, while also allowing for the key issues of the *remains* and translation to emerge.

Conclusion

Have I constructed something like the matrix, the womb of [Genet's] text? On the basis of which one could read it, that is, re-produce it? No, I see rather (but it may still be a matrix or a grammar) a sort of dredging machine. From the dissimulated, small, closed, glassed-in cabin of a crane, I manipulate some levers and, from afar... I plunge a mouth of steel in the water. And I scrape {*racle*} the bottom, hook onto stones and algae there that I lift up in order to set them down on the ground while the water quickly falls back from the mouth. And I begin to scrape {*rader*}, to scratch, to dredge the bottom of the sea, the mother {*mer*}. I barely hear the noise of the water from the little room. The toothed matrix {*matrice dentée*} only withdraws what it can, some algae, some stones. Some bits {*morceaux*}, since it bites {*mord*}. Detached. But the remain(s) passes between its lips. You do not catch the sea. She always re-forms herself (Derrida 1986b, 204-205).

I begin this final section by returning to the epigraph used in my Introduction. It is, of course, the passage from Derrida that first drew my interest to the *remains*. As I have argued throughout, this extract from Derrida's writing outlines one of the most important connections between the *remains* and interpretation or translation. That is to say, the resistance of the text or sign to any kind of machine or formulation that seeks to comprehend and, ultimately, apprehend the meaning contained within. I have elaborated the thesis further through the three definitions of the *remains* explored in the succeeding chapters, in addition to the key similarities and differences between the *remains* and other quasi-transcendentals such as iterability, the 'trace' and survival. I have also shown that this inability to grasp and thus limit the sign or text is precisely what permits the idea of ethics and hospitality to emerge, as it is this remainder that allows for the other to survive being subsumed through the hospitality of translation.

In exploring these definitions of the *remains* in light of Derrida's broader work, I sought to continue the work that Michael Naas (2016) identified and attempted in his essay on the *remains*; that is, his effort to elevate its status in deconstruction. As cited in Chapter 2, where Naas writes of the *remains* as scraps or leftovers, he writes that these morsels came from a meal that was never really served, that the meal of the *remains* was still to come. I agree with Naas' argument that the *remains* 'is just as important as any of these other operative or operating terms in Derrida's work' (*ibid*, 108), such as pharmakon or différance. Throughout this thesis, I explored and outlined how it combines with yet is

separate from, the other quasi-transcendentals, what Naas terms operative or operating terms, in Derrida's work.

Returning to Derrida's metaphor of the dredging machine to describe both the interpretation and the fall of the *remains*, I have also highlighted the special importance of the *remains* as a body of water, the sea. Much of Derrida's writing on translation comes back to the movement of water, from the waves that overrun the border of the shore, in 'Living On/Borderlines', to the quote cited above. This fluidity of translation is carried through In Peggy Kamuf's metaphor of the passage of translation as that of a ferry that carries passengers and language from shore to shore. What we see in this language, these metaphors of water and movement, is a way of escaping the mathematical aspects of economy in translation; a mathematical understanding of the remainder as quantifiable.

As discussed in the second chapter, it is problematic to understand the *remains* as discrete from the sign, as something that can be added back to it in order to recover the full presence of meaning. Rather, it is crucial that what escapes the reading be in a way, incomprehensible. As such, we are haunted by the spectre of what was left behind, rather than the body of the *remains*. This epigraph serves as a point from which to reconsider the deconstruction of Western translation theory in light of the *remains*. It reveals the crucial point where the *remains* reveals the movement of deconstruction that is already taking place inside the metaphysics of presence. Rather than arguing that the sign is whole, is full of presence in and of itself, with the reading only taking a part of an otherwise complete meaning, Derrida instead argues that the meaning is produced through the context of the sign and its relationship and connections to other signs. Unable to saturate a context, to limit it and own it, the reader/translator can never completely grasp all of the future potential meanings of the sign. It is not the case that the sign is either completely present or not, rather that there is always the potential for the sign to be reinscribed into future signs. That is one of the significant ramifications of the sea as metaphor; the sea is no more or less complete than it was before the dredging, it simply is as it was before, waiting to be dredged. Thus, as much as the meaning can be seen as captured or grasped in the act of translation, there are always aspects that are absent.

However, this absence is still present in a way. Derrida's description of the water rushing back signifies the incomplete nature of the translation produced. And it is clear from my discussion of the debates over the differing methods and approaches to translation

outlined in the opening chapter that many scholars understand the inability to perfect translation. Indeed, these debates and developments in theory are indicative that translators are aware of this impossibility of ‘faithfully’ translating a text. Thus, to translate is to be aware of the level of artifice in the process.

This recognition led my argument to the issues of mourning in translation that Ricoeur outlined, which I have discussed in Chapter 5. Mourning, in turn, relates back to the understanding or image of the *remains* as corpse, specifically the nature of the corpse and mourning as both present inside of us, yet absent outside of it. This is also the case in the *remains* understood as Derrida’s cinder, insofar as the cinder is an incomplete memorial of what was. In this way, the *remains* exists as a marker, though not a discrete marker, that makes the perfect translation an impossibility. It creates a site at which to grieve for what is lost in the translation.

It is important to note that this grieving for translation, this idea of the loss in translation, is different from that proposed by Blanchot and Ricoeur. Derrida, like all thinkers, was a product of his context. His thinking developed from the conversations, debates, arguments, disagreements, and collaborations with his contemporaries and peers. As this thesis demonstrated, this connection with both the philosophical tradition that came before and the field that developed through and alongside his writings is evident in Derrida’s thought and writing on the *remains* and the survival of the text through the im/possibility of translation.

Along with the metaphor of water, Derrida’s use of the ‘cinder’ is also central to the deconstruction of the ideal origin at play in Western translation theory. Throughout his work *Cinders*, Derrida never argues for the existence of the object before the fire, in the sense that it could exist in a form we could recognise and encounter. Instead, the trace of the cinder becomes one of an already damaged or incomplete sign. Thus, it is not a matter of capturing or recreating the ideal original text through translation, as the original text was never ideal to begin with; it is always already a cinder. This is how the *remains* helps allow for survival, as the cinder cannot be grasped, like the harbour cannot be dredged, thus the sign is never captured and subsumed. However, as I have argued throughout this thesis, my aim is not merely to give an existing function a new name, to term the *remains* what others term *différance* or iterability. In this conclusion I ask: what does the *remains* do to assist translators working with deconstruction in their daily practice? To answer this, it is

necessary to return to Derrida's use of 'under erasure' and the notion of undecidability that haunts ethics, hospitality and translation.

Before that, however, I will first return to the sign of the *pharmakon*, as defined in the first chapter, in order to demonstrate the impact of this understanding of translation by focusing upon a term that, as noted before, seemingly resists translation. *Pharmakon* presents numerous challenges to the translator, in both how to translate, or indeed, if one should seek to translate it at all. In the first instance, as noted in the first chapter, there is difficulty in how to begin to translate it. As I cited previously, *pharmakon* can, 'without mistranslation,' be rendered or understood as meaning 'remedy, recipe, poison, drug, philtre etc.' (Derrida 2004b, 77). This plurality, the polysemy of meaning in the sign, leads Léon Robin, the translator of the French version that Derrida uses in his reading of Plato, to make choices: 'the sign *pharmakon*, which Robin (for example) dismembers, here as remedy, there as drug' (Derrida 2004b, 103). What Derrida accuses Robin of dismembering in this passage is the sign from the chain of signification, as the translator seeks to arrest or halt the ambiguity of *pharmakon*'s meaning.

In translating Plato's work, Robin chooses various differing meanings for the word *pharmakon*. One could argue that this choice of potential meaning, of remedy or poison, is following the intention of the author. However, as explained throughout this thesis, intentionality can never be presupposed as a whole or complete object, as something to use to limit or lock down the context of the sign. Rather, as the context is always indeterminable, so too must the intention of the author be recognised as not ever completely known or understood, if indeed it is any more correct to translate with their intention at the forefront. In one particular passage, Derrida notes of Robin's choice thus: '[the] common translation of *pharmakon* by *remedy* – a beneficent drug – is not, of course, inaccurate' (*ibid*, 99). However, inaccurate is not the same as completely correct, either, as Derrida continues, arguing that the 'translation by "remedy" can thus be neither simply accepted nor rejected' (*ibid*, 101). The reason for this, for Derrida, comes from how *pharmakon* signifies both remedy, and, at another stage in the text, poison (*ibid*, 100-101). Even the choice of remedy, as opposed to cure, drug or medicine, is questioned by Derrida, as all are correct and, indeed, each word choice has implications for how to understand or read Plato.

Thus, the first challenge to the translator, over how to render the word in a new language, can be seen as a kind of ethical trace in the form of the *remains*. Each translation

leaves behind the other potential meanings of the sign, meanings that could vastly change the meaning or interpretation of each passage in which the term *pharmakon* is used. Thus, the demands of the sign present as a choice to the translator, and leave a trace of the decision made and the meaning left. In this first challenge presented to the translator, I argue that there is a kind of ethical understanding in the notion of the intention of the author, around what they are thought to be trying to say. Beyond the simple division of poison and cure, there are the numerous other ways it can be rendered, as drug, remedy, medicine etc. Each of these terms is both more and less than the original, as each carry further meanings or potential readings, such as the natural vs the synthetic of remedy and drug, to name but one example.

However, there is a challenge even before this, in the question of whether to begin to translate at all. Derrida makes a strategic decision to place the original Greek words in parentheses after the translated term, and to thus preserve or reveal the original text. But Derrida is not seeking to translate Plato, rather he is providing a reading or commentary of him to a particular audience. In doing so, Derrida allows for the other potential meanings linked to the *pharmakon* to come through, such as magus and scapegoat. However, there are questions around whether these meaning would be appropriate to convey in a translation, and if seeking to retain or include them, whether that would upset the flow for the reader in order to preserve a potential meaning from the original. While this seemingly takes on a different ethical challenge, one focused on the reader, there is a similarity in both. As I will go on to conclude, the *remains*, the trace of the decision, is not one made in the face of the sign, but of the other. In the first challenge explored in regards to *pharmakon*, the other was Plato himself, and the notion of fidelity to an understanding or view of his intention. In the second challenge, the other is the reader, and the decisions comes from how far to bring the original text into their language and the consequences of doing so. To explore this further, I will now turn back to the concept of being ‘under erasure.’

As demonstrated at the end of the previous chapter, the act of placing something under erasure ultimately involves an act of transformation (Anderson 2010, 93). Thus, the decision made in the face of the other, the decision regarding who we will be ethical or responsible towards has ramifications for how we understand ourselves. I referred to this point earlier in relation to Derrida’s rebuttal of the selfhood of Ricoeur’s theory, instead of viewing the other as the site of an unknowable or aporia. Anderson’s argument about

transformation through decision has ramifications in translation and reading, as she explains:

Transformation is a process involving interpretation, which in turn is always iterative. To transform, then, is a repetition of the past (and thus an acknowledgement and recognition of that which we inherit) but with difference' (*ibid*, 106).

Anderson explains here that the sign placed under erasure, like all signs, is capable of repetition and is therefore iterable. However, in explaining interpretation as iteration, the importance of this for translation becomes clear. The previous chapters outlined how I see the *remains* as similar yet different to iterability. While they both disrupt the concept of a homogenous or totalising reading, I understand the *remains* as a trace and thus different to iterability. What the *remains* traces, however, is the result of this iterability. The *remains* marks the site of that which escapes any attempt at reading, yet what is produced by this is the physical marks that Derrida calls 'remainder effects'. Thus, we can understand translation, specifically individual translations themselves, as marked by remainder effects; they are a trace of the various readings made by the translator, the trace of iterability.

Iterability and the *remains* are the process of the transformation of the sign, and are involved from the start with the process or act of translation. Anderson concludes: 'inheritance does not involve a "passive" transmission of information or objects from one heir to another in a genealogical-teleological line. Rather, what is received is not only already interpreted and translated by tradition and context, but continues to be "actively" translated' (Anderson 2010, 107). From this, we see that in reading the text, we are actively translating it, transforming its meaning and the meaning of the signs. What is important is that the translation produced, (assuming there is one at the end), survives as a record of this interpretation, of this transformation. The translator is faced with decisions throughout the engagement with the text, most of which are decisions I have raised in the opening chapter of the thesis. For example, does one follow the demand of property or of quantity that Derrida ascribes to a relevant translation? Does one seek to paraphrase or follow the original more literally?

As a consequence of this, I argue that the *remains* is not the trace of the decisions made by the translator in relation to a sign, but rather it is the trace of decisions made to and for the other. There are many 'others' in the text, such as the other meanings and words the translator could have used to express the sign, or the other culture the translator

encounters in the source text. In responding to these others, the translator is not just selecting one option, they are making what can be understood as an ethical decision. In choosing one word to replace another, the translator is ethical to that word while unethical to all the other possible words left out, as well as all other possible meanings of the original sign that he or she ignored. When encountering the other text, as explained above, the translator faces the other of another culture. In translating, the translator once more has an ethical choice: to keep the 'foreignness' of the text intact, to leave some aspect of it that feels uncomfortable to the reader, or to move it completely to the new language, which would be to violently seek to homogenise the singular text but be more ethical to the universal reader. All decisions made by the translator can be understood as ethical ones, regardless of whether the translator is aware of them or not, as all these decisions will leave an imprint or mark that will form the trace of the *remains*.

This is why my examination of the *remains* in the previous chapters is so important to our understanding of the process. I argue that it is only through an understanding of the *remains* that we can understand translation as the trace of ethical decisions, or decisions made that can be viewed under a framework of ethics. The remains and other similar quasi-transcendentals (hauntology, the archive, living on etc.) offer a way of reading translations as decisions made in the face of the other. But these decisions are not computations, as they come from a position of undecidability. As a consequence of this, I understand that translation is ultimately a site of the undecidable, through the encounter with the other that is foreign. Thus, all translations exist as remnants of the decisions made by the translator about how best to be responsible towards the text and the reader. Translations, the remainder effects of iterations, while impossible under a theory that strives for perfection in translation, are ethical and pivotal in an understanding of translation and hospitality. Rather than marking the site of a failure, the translations now mark the site of the relation between the text and the foreign version of the text, between the self and the self as other.

Therefore, what my thesis offers is not a new way of understanding translation per se, but a new way of viewing the *translations*. Like the eulogy or monument for the corpse or the signature of inheritance, the translations produced, the actual texts themselves, becomes markers for both mourning and remembrance, yet also for the trace of the cinder. Comparing these texts with each other, like the trace of the *remains* as between the sign and the self-same sign, allows for a way of witnessing some of the decisions made and, thus, some of the undecidable moments. This is why I term the *remains* as an ethical trace,

not because it itself is ethical, but rather because it goes some way to recording decisions of hospitality, law, and justice, which, as I argued in the previous chapter, are all inherently connected to translation.

At this junction, it is important to return to one of the decisions I made at the outset of this thesis, that of focusing on translation as opposed to reading or interpretation in general. As this thesis has argued, not only does the translation produced help highlight or reveal the work of the remainder effect, in comparing the difference between translations or translated text to source text, there is also the fundamental nature of translation itself. Derrida's argument of translation as the very passage into philosophy places translation at the beginning of reading or interpreting meaning. Kamuf explains this further when she notes the connection between reading and translating, that one reads as one translates (2017, 232), and I argue that the converse is true, that one translates as one reads. Thus, when speaking of translation, I evoke all acts of reading or interpretation. The encounter with the foreign is true in all reading, as Derrida reveals in *Cinders* with his reference to the author of his works as separate from himself. The author of *Cinders* is not the same Derrida as the Derrida of other times, other contexts. There is always the negotiation of the other as guest and foreigner, even if that other is yourself.

Returning to the relationship between ethics and hospitality, what the *remains* offers the translator is not the knowledge that their attempt to translate is doomed to failure, as this would be to fall victim to the nihilism of free-play argued against in the opening chapter, but the knowledge that his or her translation marks and records these encounters of hospitality. Indeed, the translations produced, the remainder effects that occur from the work of the *remains* in the sign, become more important the more translations there are. Like the sign finding its meaning from the trace and deferral onto other signs, so too does the translation gain its meaning from the exchange back and forth between other translations, either that have come before or that might come in the future. The text not only survives through the untranslatability of the sign, it calls the translator forth to ever more translations to come.

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