

On the Spectrality of the Inter-state-eal/International: A Forum on Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* after 25 Years, Part III

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Abstract: Jacques Derrida delivered the basis of *The Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, & the New International* as a plenary address at the conference 'Whither Marxism?' hosted by the University of California, Riverside, in 1993. The longer book version was published in French the same year and appeared in English and Portuguese the following year. In the decade after the publication of *Specters*, Derrida's analyses provoked a large critical literature and invited both consternation and celebration by figures such as Antonio Negri, Wendy Brown and Frederic Jameson. This forum seeks to stimulate new reflections on Derrida, deconstruction and *Specters of Marx* by considering how the futures past announced by the book have fared after an eventful quarter century. In this third group of contributions, Jessica Auchter, Bruna Holstein Meireles and Victor Coutinho Lage draw broadly on Derrida's writings to explore the spectrality of the international or inter-state-eal: of politics itself being based on hospitality toward the ghost as foreign guest, of the possibility of enacting a politics of spectrality that might aspire to a new kind of universality, and of how a 'without international' might escape the series of prisons that constitutes the international.

Keywords: Derrida, Jacques; spectrality; foreigners; hospitality; subjectivity; sovereignty; modern politics; international; carceral logics; Negri, Antonio.

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Welcoming the Ghost: Haunting and Foreignness in Contemporary Geopolitics

Jessica Auchter

Twenty-five years after *Specters of Marx*, we live in a world that is rapidly changing. There is a political wind blowing that carries with it a resurgence of state sovereignty in the face of globalization's blurring of borders. It emerges in the form of Brexit's rejection of the idea of a united Europe, of harsher refugee acceptance policies in the USA, Europe and Australia, of the resurgence of a far right that legitimizes nationalism and anti-immigrantism as a creed in various countries around the world. But what responsibility do we as theorists of the global have in considering this set of circumstances? This contribution seeks to revisit the spectre in Derrida's *Specters of Marx* for the purpose of thinking about the contemporary global crisis of migration and the backlash against it.

Specifically, I argue that revisiting Derrida allows us to consider the idea of an ethical imperative to welcome. Derrida considers hospitality as the initial surprise of contact with an other/foreigner, and one which is intimately connected to our own and others' vulnerability. By using this as an entry point, I ask what it means to welcome the ghost 25 years after Derrida's work. How has the idea of welcome and the encounter with the ghost been rendered in the context of contemporary geopolitics? How can we as theorists revitalize the ghostly as a means to think about contemporary encounters with foreignness? This allows us to reckon with Derrida's own idea in *Specters of Marx* (1994c: xviii) that we have some kind of responsibility 'before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist, racist, colonialist, sexist, or other kinds of exterminations,' bringing to the fore the ethical importance of considering human vulnerability in the contemporary era.

This intervention first examines the figure of the ghost itself, elaborating how the ghostly blurs our conceptions of language, as a way to argue that the ghost is a useful concept for thinking about resistances to statecraft. I then turn to the relationship between mourning and the self as a means of explaining the idea of foreignness in the ghostly. Then, I use this idea of foreignness and the ghostly to reflect on contemporary geopolitics.

The spectre of the spectre

The background to this entire argument is the idea of the sovereign state, premised on the story that the state is responsible to and for its citizens, and that responsibility does not extend beyond its borders, an argument we see in the narratives of nationalism and anti-immigrantism I mentioned at the outset of this article. Statecraft, as I have noted elsewhere (Auchter 2014), relies on the techniques of ordering and bordering, yet as this section will demonstrate, such practices are disrupted by the ghostly. This section examines the idea of the spectre to argue that its conceptual ambiguity is precisely its theoretical promise in considering the topic of the foreigner and foreignness. For Derrida (1994c:

5), the spectre is 'a paradoxical incorporation' that remains difficult to name: the ghost exceeds the bounds of language. Derrida's larger idea of hauntology is a radical injunction to rethink the givens we regularly encounter in global politics. As he notes:

What has, dare I say, constantly haunted me in this logic of the specter is that it regularly exceeds all the oppositions between visible and invisible, sensible and insensible. A specter is both visible and invisible, both phenomenal and nonphenomenal: a trace that marks the present with its absence in advance. The spectral logic is de facto a deconstructive logic. (Derrida and Stiegler 2002: 117).

In other words, the significance of the ghost is that it throws preconceived notions of politics into question. This is also related to the idea of the ghost as the uncanny. Freud's theorization of the taboo emphasizes the concurrence of the sacred and unclean in the idea of the uncanny (Freud 1919: 30). Homi Bhabha's (2001: 41) focus on hybridity also gets at this, in his reference to 'neither the One... nor the Other... but something else besides.' Indeed, the very idea of the ghostly uncanny is premised on the intrusion into domestic space of something which is not 'supposed' to be there, an idea which is connected to the contemporary figure of the foreigner in political discourse (and particularly of the illegal immigrant, a figure subject to exorcism and violence)¹

For my argument here, the significance of the ghost is that it is essentially foreign: it is a figure that is unable to be figured, that which occupies the inter-state-eal spaces, those between the state and the myths that sustain it. In other words, the ghost is the figure that reminds us that the story told by the state of its own crafting is incomplete, and rests on the deaths of others. To accept that such a figure is able to be mourned even though we cannot understand it within traditional state narratives of who is worthy of mourning (other citizens), is part of the basis of Derrida's radical politics.

In their introduction to *The Work of Mourning*, a collection of Derrida's responses to friends' deaths, Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (2003: 5) note that 'in mourning we find ourselves at a loss, no longer ourselves, as if the singular shock of what we must bear had altered the very medium in which it was to be registered. But even if death appears unspeakable, we are called upon to speak, to participate in codes of mourning.' Moving beyond ourselves, then, may be a prerequisite for the very idea of hospitality and responsibility.

It is here that the idea of the spectre becomes significant. Brault and Naas (2003: 19) note that perhaps politics itself arises out of mourning, and that there is no politics without an open hospitality to the guest as ghost. I would turn this notion on its head though: there is no politics without an open hospitality to the ghost as guest. Ghosts, as Derrida (2003: 41-2) notes, are 'the concept of the other in the same, the completely other, dead, living in me.'

For Derrida, then, because one cannot oneself experience the death of the other, mourning is a way to access this death within oneself: the mourner's lament does not reach the dead but is a balm to the self. "The singularity of the other insofar as it comes to me without being directed towards me, and the other can even be "me," me having been

already dead in the future anterior and past anterior of my photograph and in my name' (Derrida 2003: 39). In this vein, all mourning and memorialization, for Derrida (2003: 51-2), is related to the encounter with death within oneself. 'When one works on the work of mourning, one must take part in it, partake in death and in one's own death' (Derrida 2003: 142). It is in this encounter with the dead in me that the promise for true hospitality emerges. Yet such an encounter is work, the labour of overcoming that which we have been told is our identity within the schema of the sovereign state.

In other words, this idea of the encounter with the other, in the figure of the ghost, is intimately connected to political conceptions of national identity and citizenship. This has manifested in postcolonial scholarship such as the work of Homi Bhabha on hybridity detailed above, specifically the notion that there is something about identity that is both highly public and highly individual at the same time. Julia Kristeva (1991: 2-3) has also discussed this in light of the idea of identity:

it is perhaps on the basis of that contemporary individualism's subversion, beginning with the moment when the citizen-individual ceases to consider himself as unitary and glorious but discovers his incoherences and abysses, in short his 'strangenesses' – that the question arises again: no longer that of welcoming the foreigner within a system that obliterates him but of promoting togetherness of those foreigners that we all recognize ourselves to be.

As she notes, when we consider the incoherence of the citizen-individual, this opens for an alternative form of welcome. I would rephrase this for my purposes here: mourning allows us to consider the very role of the self (the idea of one's own death discussed above), and the disruption posed by the ghost to the story of modern statecraft, which moves us towards a politics of unconditional hospitality. The next section takes up this idea further.

Hospitality: on foreignness

In 1866, US Senator Jacob Howard remarked on the intent of the 14th amendment to the US Constitution:

Every person born within the limits of the United States, and subject to their jurisdiction, is by virtue of natural law and national law a citizen of the United States. This will not, of course, include persons born in the United States who are foreigners, aliens, who belong to the families of ambassadors or foreign ministers accredited to the Government of the United States, but will include every other class of persons. It settles the great question of citizenship and removes all doubt as to what persons are or are not citizens of the United States. This has long been a great desideratum in the jurisprudence and legislation of this country (Congress [USA] 1866: 2890).

This understanding sharply poses a distinction between the citizen who is automatically subject to the jurisdiction of the United States by compliance with some imagined American general will, and the foreigner, who is not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States because his/her allegiance can never be fully to the United States simply by virtue of his/her status as foreigner. This circular logic serves to automatize the logic of determining who is a citizen and excludes classes of persons by putting into question their *loyalty* to the United States.

By making it a question of loyalty, it is easy to differentiate the self from the other, the state from the foreigner, the citizen from the immigrant alien, and therefore 'settle the great question of citizenship,' as Senator Howard (Congress [USA] 1866: 2890) states. The need to settle the question of citizenship is nothing less than the question of the formation and content of the identity of the state itself and the need to coalesce this identity: statecraft. This idea puts into question how the citizen is defined, how the state presumes itself to have a people which is clearly defined against a foreigner other, a people which gives the state its authority in that founding moment, even as 'the people' can never exist prior to the state to which it belongs. As Derrida discusses in his essay *Declarations of Independence*, the 'we' speaking in the declaration 'we hold these truths to be self evident,' does not exist. The people 'do *not* exist as an entity, this entity does *not* exist *before* this declaration, not *as such*' (Derrida 2002: 49). The signature itself, the performative utterance, is also constitutive, and in fact invents the signer. This is why leaving the question hanging as to who counts as a citizen, who counts as 'the people' becomes so problematic for the state's maintenance of its identity and claims to unity of that identity. The state must constantly create and recreate its citizens as loyal subjects in order to legitimate the state itself. The state must always be the sole passion and patriotism must always remain the constant work of the state. Therefore, the work of the state is in fact to legitimize itself through appeals to a citizenry which it in fact constructs.

Being a good citizen, then, becomes about learning to disregard those outside of your state by emphasizing the commonalities between yourself and other citizens and the differences between the citizen and the foreigner. Nationalism and patriotism are therefore not organic, rather they must be constructed. 'Its [nationalist sentiment's] origin and mode are political rather than ethnic or organic, and it is engendered by a specific public teaching about, as well as the orchestrated experience of the threatened liberty of each citizen' (Smith 2003: 412). As Joseph Knippenberg (1989: 821) states, 'public education aims at creating citizens, who are utterly devoted to their homeland, love their fellow citizens, and treat foreigners harshly.'² Patriotism, the identity of the state, is produced by the state as a survival mechanism against the infiltration of the foreigner. Yet this patriotism must be a constant work, an education and re-education, a (re)presentation, the goal of which is to mask the dependence of the state on its constitutive outside, the foreigner.

The foreigner, in its multiple figurations, is that which puts the founding moment of the state into question(s), the figure which challenges the claims to unity and identity and legitimacy of origin which the state so loudly proclaims. As Prem Kumar Rajaram (2004: 220) states, 'sovereign territoriality is always being constituted and challenged, exclusions are ongoing. Each advent of the stranger at the threshold of the norm must be dealt with;

and each response to the stranger reinforces the sense of what it is to be part of the normal community.' The relationship between the state and the foreigner is constantly being resituated as the state attempts to maintain its norms, its perpetual normalization techniques for the very maintenance of an identity of the state.

If, then, the very idea of citizenship is a construction of statecraft, and the foreigner is the foil to the citizen, it is worth returning to Derrida's idea of the ghost to revisit the very idea of foreignness via the notion of hospitality. Derrida articulates hospitality as the initial surprise of contact with an other/foreigner, and one which is intimately connected to our own and others' vulnerability. The remainder of this section elucidates an ethics and politics of welcome that offers a resistance to the exclusionary practices of statecraft detailed above. In this sense, in the remainder of the piece I theorize the foreigner-as-ghost and ghost-as-foreigner in the context of this moment in contemporary geopolitics.

For Derrida, the figure of the foreigner is an essential one in his consideration of hospitality. He argues in *Of Hospitality*, in the context of the figure of Socrates:

The foreigner is first of all foreign to the legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated, the right to asylum, its limits, norms, policing, etc. He has to ask for hospitality in a language which by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house, the host, the king, the lord, the authorities, the nation, the State, the father, etc. This personage imposes on him translation into their own language, and that's the first act of violence. That is where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country? (Derrida 2000: 15).

In this vein, he turns the idea of the foreigner on its head. To the state, the foreigner poses the question to us of who we are, and the state's identity is formed in relation to and relative to the other, to what the state is not or does not govern or protect. For Derrida, though, the foreigner poses the question of how we can or should encounter someone foreign without subsuming them into our own language through this act of violence. In this sense, for him the very figure of the foreigner as understood by the state is a paradox: when the foreigner presents themselves to us, we can only understand them if they speak *our* language, yet once they speak our language, they are part of our system and thus not a foreigner at all (if we consider language to be not narrowly understood as only language itself, but rather as indicative of a larger system of discourse and understanding).

This is why Derrida offers up an analytical distinction between the foreigner and the barbarian. As he notes, 'the difference, one of the subtle and sometimes ungraspable differences between the foreigner and the absolute other is that the latter cannot have a name or a family name' (Derrida 2000: 25). In this sense, the foreigner can be nameable, while the absolute other does not present themselves in language. For Derrida (2000: 25), hospitality to the latter is unconditional and absolute.

Absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner (provided with a family name, with the social status of being a foreigner, etc.), but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I give place to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. The law of absolute hospitality commands a hospitality by right, with law or justice as rights.

What this means for my wider argument here is that the unconditional hospitality Derrida lays out is nothing less than the welcome of the ghost. To welcome the ghost, we would need to accept that each welcome is an act of mourning, an acceptance that the other is mournable, and that ontological givens (identity, the state, etc.) are haunted by the spectre of their own creation: 'the future can only be for ghosts' (Derrida 1994c: 45). While memory can be uniting, it can also be incredibly divisive, as scholars of ethnic conflict remind us. Given this, a move beyond, or before discourse, into hauntology rather than ontology, a move to mourning rather than memorialization, can perhaps revitalize our common vulnerabilities – as Derrida (2003: 90) notes, his mourning for Max Loreau places him at a loss for words: 'This says something about mourning which hollows out the depths of our memories.'

Concluding remarks

Derrida's *The Gift of Death* (2007: 14) notes that philosophy is attentive anticipation of death. He argues that death is the ultimate responsibility because 'death is very much that which nobody else can undergo or confront in my place' (Derrida 2007: 45, 42). In this vein, death is intimately connected to his perspective on responsibility, which cannot be transmitted through the medium of language (Derrida 2007: 60).

What I have traced here is a theoretical justification for unconditional hospitality to the ghost, and in a wider way a call for more mourning, which as noted above, can hollow out memories and remind us of our shared vulnerabilities. This has some bearing on the contemporary question of migration and refugees: As Derrida (2000: 77) argues, 'Let us say yes to who or what turns up, before any determination, before any anticipation, before any identification, whether or not it has to do with a foreigner, an immigrant, an invited guest, or an unexpected visitor, whether or not the new arrival is the citizen of another country, a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female.' However, this piece has also been a more substantive call to disrupt the binaries that sustain the myths of modern statecraft that allow for the first and foremost ethical (and not only political) responsibility of an individual to be to his or her state, advocating welcoming the ghost as a way of thinking through Derrida's relevance to contemporary geopolitics. But perhaps even more importantly, I have argued that welcoming the ghost allows us to shift beyond adherence to the objective structures of language and move beyond restrictive structures of theorizing to be the kind of scholars Derrida (1994c: 11) argues do not exist:³ those who believe looking is not sufficient, and who speak to ghosts.

Yet Another Effort to Live with the Spectres

Bruna Holstein Meireles

Jacques Derrida was a thinker of the event. In light of this, I cannot help but wonder if there is any more fitting way to celebrate the anniversary of a book so rich in its deconstructive attitude as is *Specters of Marx* than to use this forum as an opportunity to make an event out of Derrida himself, even if tentatively so. For the nature of the book poses a challenge to any simple attempt to get a grip on what from it would or wouldn't still be of relevance since it was first published in 1993. However difficult the decision might be – and decide one must – I take that one of the most important of Derrida's contributions, one that appears as a *motif* throughout *Specters*, is his radical critique of the political nature of identity. It is before this call for deconstruction that I stand here today in the anguish-provoking position of an heiress.

Derrida argued that the subject lives in an imminent state of *crisis* that amounts to an inherent rupture that is therefore impossible to be finally resolved, to an *aporia*. Accordingly, to theorise this aporetic condition would demand that we – he, I and also you – think about historicity without giving it over to the metaphysical ideal of presence. In what follows, I argue that some of the ways Derrida puts this general insight to work in *Specters of Marx* offer us an interesting avenue from which to explore how we might be able to carry and pass on of the deconstructive baton given the current complexities of global life. In exploring this, I shall venture through some of the limits the heritage that both Derrida and *Specters* pose today. His insights about spectrality and historicity will be read as an invitation for us to go beyond Derrida, right into the corner of international politics, the discipline of International Relations (IR), and the mutual implication of subjectivity and contemporary politics. This shall allow me to probe the extent to which the modern problematic of an ideally internationalised world could help us enact a politics of spectrality that aspires to a kind of universality that would be universal just as long as it keeps such a universalising predicament of the world under the weight of an unanswerable question mark.

To be is to be haunted

One of Derrida's recurrent concerns was to question what he took to be the philosophical edifice of Western thinking, whose grounding premise is that reality is infinite, and according to which this reality of the present to itself is read as the condition for history. He laid out a radical critique of identity as ipseity, thus 'putting into question the ontotheo – but also archeo-teleological concept of history in order to show that this onto-theo-archeoteleology locks up, neutralizes, and finally cancels historicity.' As Derrida (1994c: 94) noted in *Specters of Marx*, to think, in this context, had always been the case 'of thinking another historicity [...] another opening of event-ness as historicity that permitted one not to renounce [it].' But what would such opening demand? First and foremost, one

ought to look for how the event offers itself as the irreducible condition of both the possibility *and* impossibility of the assumption of ipseity as it has been idealized in conceptualizations of identity.

Central in the modern variation of this predicament is the paradoxical work of representation. The political theorist Anne Norton (1988: 24) illustrates the point with relative clarity. She argues that ‘the power of writing is constituted by the willingness of people to surrender to a lie, to take one thing as currency for another.’ The belief in the sovereign capacity to attribute form provisionally removes men ‘from the constraints of temporality attendant on their corporeal being’ (Norton 1988: 24). It is a quite phantasmagoric thing that taking for present what is absent ends up furnishing ‘a forgetfulness of death’ right at the moment men are thought to *have had* to make absent something of themselves so as to make present what they supposedly had always been. The ghostly character of finitude can only be sublimated under the limits of law, right there and when men are thought to have become subjects now properly free ‘to create themselves as they will’ (Norton 1988: 24). Thus already in the opening pages of *Specters*, Derrida (1994a: xvii–xviii) incites the reader to refuse this kind of sublimation in order for us to ‘learn to live *with* ghosts.’

To live with the spectrality overflowing from, but also right into, such an aporetic reality would be to look for the workings of what Derrida called *hauntology*. Hauntology denotes an odd anteriority. Although it works structurally, it is also heterogenous to the order of the various claims of representation in the discourses it constitutes, such as ‘ontology, theology, positive or negative onto-theology’ (Derrida 1994c: 63). The category is central because its heterogeneity signals to the fundamental disjunction that continuously founds Being as a presence that is never quite present to itself – a disjunction that, nevertheless, still makes possible an obscuring kind of presence. Spectrality thus revolves around a surplus of meaning, an excess that is usually made the object of boundary practices by the kind of thinking that privileges presence, which Derrida calls metaphysical. Accordingly, this excessiveness is that which threatens to disclose things as out of their proper place, as if the arrival of the unexpected (of what would then appear as truly other, a radical alterity) suddenly reveals that things *are always already* out of tune.

By its turn, the encounter with alterity as such foregrounds the originary violence of a radically political injunction. In this other scene of discourse, we are faced with the force of a violence that is anterior to that of meaning under the boundedness of law. At the same time this violence is what makes claims of presence possible, it is also what fundamentally ‘interrupts time, disarticulates it, dislodges it, displaces it out of its natural lodging’ (Derrida 1994c: 37). Time and again the excessiveness irrupts, rendering incalculable any given measure for action. Spectrality exhorts the subject to promise meaning – to decide, when and where meaning falters, so as to variously keep giving life to law, meaning and identity. This, to be sure, is a matter of faith rather than ‘knowledge,’ for the subject is deprived of any guarantees in the moment of decision. Hence the undecidable quality of a surplus that cannot be entirely contained by any law. Hence also the anteriority of the Law that commands such promising without offering anything in return but the injunction that it is necessary to violently carve the decision out.

Alterity, in this sense, incites both practices of temporalization and spatialization while undoing the very possibility of their presence, and of there being spaces and times in themselves which would then be amenable to the work of thought – if the latter is taken to be a matter of mere translation of what *is*. This is valid for the object just as much as for the subject of knowledge. As Derrida (1998: 28) noted, ‘the deconstructive necessity drives one to put into question even this principle of self-presence in the unity of consciousness or in this auto-determination.’ Therefore, spectrality and hauntology point to the quintessentially excessive nature of the modern subject. *To be is ultimately to be haunted*. We are thereby speaking of a law of historicity that is performative. Ergo the first of two indispensable elements to a historicity that eschews exorcism: to come to terms with the violence of structural indeterminacy constitutive of the event, and, consequently, with the indeterminacy of ourselves as subjects whose subjectivity will never have been present or absent to itself, for what renders it historically or conceptually possible is also what puts it under erasure.

The modern politics of subjectivity

Derrida’s interest in event-ness wasn’t esoteric. In *Specters*, he related it to transformations taking place in ‘the topological structure of the *res publica*’. Inasmuch as these are rendering ‘problematic the very presumption of the topographical, the presumption that there was a *place*, and thus an identifiable and stabilizable body for public speech, the public thing, or the public cause,’ one might read this moment as an opportunity for thinking about what is, or should be, ‘political’ in politics (Derrida 1994c: 98-99). It is noteworthy that right after diagnosing this crisis in the public, Derrida went on to discuss the ‘plagues of the “new world order.”’ When talking about international institutions in this context, he advanced his hope that they could get further out from under the claws of particular states’ interests. International law should become ever more universal, for lack of a better word. It should be put also to undermine what it was created simply to regulate, in the sense of further disjoining what is always already disjointed. This is there presented both as a cause for celebration and a call to action (Derrida 1994c: 104-105).

However brief the commentary, Derrida touched upon a predicament that I take to be far more consequential to the disjunction of the *locus* of public judgement in contemporary politics. It refers to the historically specific horizon of the politics of subjectivity that is constitutive of modern life. Modern politics, in this sense, both outlines and connects the modern subject, the particular modern state and the collectivity of modern states in what should be (come) a single world of humanity. Furthermore, it conveys a productive paradox rather than a matter of mere relation, what some thinkers in IR have called the problem of modern sovereignty. In what follows, I mobilise two of them, Richard Ashley and R. B. J. Walker, to argue that ‘things international’ shouldn’t be congratulated simply because they might further limit state sovereignty. They are of consequence because the international always already gives itself over as an event that deconstructs the ‘paradigm of sovereignty’ that orients any legitimate claiming of the ‘public thing’ in modernity, which

comprehends, but is also irreducible to claims of judgement emanating from particular states.

Sovereignty for Ashley (1988, 1989, 1995) and Walker (1993, 2010, 2016, 2017) is the paradigmatic problem that drives contemporary life. It entails the spatio-temporal framing of human experience according to an ambivalent conception of the human being. Humanity has come to be privileged as a special kind of 'universality' that should be historically warranted by the transcendental powers of subjectivity. Yet, despite all the claims about man's freedom being anchored in subjectivity, modern discourse also takes the human subject to be largely delimited by historicity (see Gordon 2012). In this context, and as my previous reference to Norton's work coyly suggested, to be a modern subject has generally amounted to the question of formalization, where the main problematic of human experience becomes one of authorizing the authority to make legitimate claims about what is of necessity in the lawfulness of the world. All of this to give *man*, taken to be the unit of the public domain of humanity, a fighting chance to transcend as many of the limitations externally imposed upon his being as possible, and thus to *become* sovereign.

It shouldn't be surprising if the form of the quest for sovereignty has begun to sound familiar to the reader. After all, modern political discourse variously tells the tale that *men* ought to have relinquished their rights to individually determine what is of necessity so as to have created a being that is abstracted from them, and thus endowed with the legitimate authority to do so in their names. The state, in this sense, comes to add what wasn't naturally there, giving life to the public every time it enacts what would be better suited for the freedom of those equally (i.e., collectively) subjected to its power to decide as such (Ashley 1989, 1995). The anthropology in question, it turns out, is a *political anthropology*. The tricky thing, however, is that this political arrangement is particularly embodied but universalist in scope. Although it depends on the institution of the particular state, the latter's legitimation is to be found before subjectivity. The state, in this sense, emerges as a potential problem just as much as it is a central part of the solution. Consequently, the drive for domestication cannot afford to stop at the edges of the state; subjectivity must be extended once more, beyond the boundaries marked by the imaginary of the civil compact.

The need for something of a higher moral order has come to mean that the unity the subject promises should be enacted, albeit differently, among states as well. The states' system thereby marks the limits of modern humanity, the supposedly overarching spatio-temporality to which the remainder of the world must be brought within (Walker 2010 2016, 2017). Accordingly, and paradoxically, the problematizing logic behind particular states' legitimation is the same underlying the ideal that only *in* an adequately internationalised world would the subject be able to overcome whatever obstructs his way to proper freedom, proper sovereignty, proper humanity. Here, we find ourselves before an anteriority in tune with spectrality. And since this is an essay about spirits and spectres, it might be fitting to resume this domesticating drive by going back to an injunction that was dear to none other than Derrida himself. Only, we shall give it a kick from a different Derridean spirit: *Yet another effort to patrol the specters, humankind, if you would become properly human!*⁴

I say 'a different Derridean spirit,' first and foremost, because I believe Derrida ends up missing some important political implications of his thought. For if we take spectrality in the direction here proposed, there can't be any hope for things international. Notwithstanding the sacrifices one is willing to endure or impose upon others, the 'international society' that remains amenable to claims of unfinished expansion is itself bound to an irreducible aporia. In principle, the particular state and the system of states are the two equally necessary limit conditions to the historical articulation of subjectivity. Also in principle, there can't be two legitimate claims to sovereignty coming from competing political 'levels' concomitantly, as Walker argues. Yet, we have both, and not without serious complications. The consequences are tremendous because there is no transcending this double-bind. As a certain spirit of Max Weber would put it, all we can do before claims that are both demanded and contradicting is to negotiate them to the best of our ability, working them through politically.

More to the point, the necessity of continuous negotiation also suggests that the legitimacy of decisions about *the locus of the public* is relativized at the conceptual inception of contemporary politics. In this sense, the tension at the heart of the aporetic structuring of modern politics is what is highly productive of the public basis underlying judgement claims about what humanity and/or citizenship must mean. Those coming from the vantage point of the system, for instance, can problematize certain particular states' practices as risking whatever should be taken as the signifiers of modern freedom and equality. To varying extents, states can rightfully do the same in regard to international institutions, to other particular states, and even to individuals. These claims are political, therefore, because they play on the irruption of excesses that could be readily problematized from shifting political locations, therefore accounting for the effect of the presence of the entire arrangement of modern politics.

What remains and the effort for justice

The reader could ask, at this point, if too much theoretical investment in the aporias of modern politics would not serve as intellectual justification for a dangerous nihilism. To answer this question, I go back to Derrida once more, who I believe would've answered with a joyful, though certainly disturbing, 'yes and no.' Sure, to recognize and understand the always constitutive role of violence and the inherent indetermination of modern subjectivity is central. However, to do so can only amount to a provisional first step if one's goal is to think about politics while also grasping the conditions of possibility of another historicity. More is needed, and it is with the second element of this endeavour that I shall deal now. For there is a dimension of *resistance* that is inseparable from deconstruction.

To be fair, Derrida didn't really resort to resistance in *Specters*. Indeed, he hardly used this word at all. This is somewhat odd if we take into account that, in *Resistances of Psychoanalysis* (1998), he revealed that this was one of his favourite words, one to which he had been drawn ever since he could remember.⁵ In that book, Derrida attempted to work this attraction out at the same time he looked at resistance from what he called

the 'hyperanalyticism' of deconstruction. There, we read how deconstruction has always been in the business of resistances. On the one hand, the deconstructive drive is directed precisely towards the resistance of those practices that variously and inexhaustibly stick to the privileging of presence. On the other hand, deconstruction can only do its job by tracing yet a different kind of resistance. This one, by its turn, isn't graspable in terms of presence, whose narratives already assume a primordial concept of resistance as the subjective opposition to reason, knowledge, and their promise of progressive self-determination. Indeed, this other resisting signals to *what remains despite the desire for presence*. What remains can thereby be read in the spectral jargon as the excessiveness that always already haunts claims of presence, disjoining them from their very start, whenever and wherever one might try to locate it.

Even though the language of remains is posterior, it seems Derrida had the injunction to trace what remains in mind when, in *Specters*, he signaled the possibility of there being a different politics of the event – one that wouldn't neutralize the spectrality of historicity. Just as resistances' 'polyphony' needed to be brought to the fore, this politics also entails a reworking of the relationship between justice and responsibility. In this context, what allows us to answer the question of nihilism with the affirmativeness of a *yes* is emancipation. Nonetheless, this is an emancipation that is strange to the modern ideal of freedom as progressively breaking free. It pertains, instead, to the non-saturable opening for promise in the sense I explored in the first section of this essay. The promise, that is, that doesn't promise an object but celebrates the enduring possibility of promising as the odd and productive anteriority. The excessivity is as undeconstructible as it keeps shifting and surpassing claims of presence, and every time it does so, we find ourselves before the 'formal structure of promise' that can never be completely exorcised (Derrida 1994c: 85-86).

The eschatological quality of the promise is key to Derrida's problematization of the historicity of the human as *being heir*, as we find it in *Specters*. We inherit, first and foremost, the opening for decision that spectrality renders non-saturable. The directive for action in this context is the testimonial. It is an *ethos* according to which 'to bear witness would be to bear witness to what we are insofar as we inherit, and that [...] we inherit the very thing that allows us to bear witness to it' (Derrida 1994c: 68). The indispensability of language places us before an overwhelming indetermination that at the same time pulls us up again so as to answer and to promise. The indetermination to which the excess can be traced is key, for it puts us in the position of responsibility where we have to decide about what is, in itself, undecidable. We testify, therefore, to the heritage that unbinds the present in an exhortation that pulses from the past just as much as it comes from the future, opening up the now of historicity for the uncertainty of what is to come. Without it, Derrida (1998: 37) warned, 'no event would take place. Not even analysis. Not even the place.' The temporality in which one inherits the promise is the very 'condition of a re-politicization, perhaps of another concept of the political' (Derrida 1994c: 94).

Justice is also of central importance to this project. Elsewhere, Derrida pointed out that, because of its intimate relation to incalculability, justice becomes accessible through the radicality of the strange experience of the *perhaps*. The perhaps of justice, by its turn, is the experience of alterity that 'opens up for *l'avenir* of the transformation, the recasting

or re-founding of law and politics' (Derrida 1992: 27). Justice is the condition for the possibility of history itself. This is the sense in which the political injunction to decide and to promise is always a call to justice. 'To do justice,' therefore, can only be a task equally excessive, not knowing any kind of end. To answer to the event without renouncing the singularity of the spectral (instead of simply recognizing alterity as difference), demands an infinite responsibility in which who or what is other arrives as justice (Derrida 1994c: 33).

Towards another relationality?

The politics of the event that foregrounds spectrality can also be read as connected to an alternative experience of relationality. The alternative status comes from it paradoxically binding only to the extent it works to undo the very premise of unity that is usually associated with concepts such as community (Derrida 2005a). In *Specters*, this appears as the possibility of unity in dispossessedness. The *new* International would have been, in this sense, a community explicitly erected on the presence of what there isn't, on anonymity. Derrida seemed aware of the tactical role of the proposal. After all, deconstruction is only possible to the extent it stays in tension with the aporias that are its analytical objects. The tension itself must live on. Accordingly, a new politics of the spectral entails a being-with driven by the desire to disjoint, disarticulate, deconstruct, which, in so doing, privileges the siamese-twin experiences of justice and responsibility. Anonymity, in this context, should be found in 'a kind of counter-conjuration, in the (theoretical and practical) critique of the state of international law, the concepts of State and nation, and so forth: in order to renew this critique, and especially to radicalize it' (Derrida 1994c: 107).

Such is the call for an enduring and collective effort to live with spectres. Before this call, I take the opportunity to insist on Derrida's invitation to radicalization. The disjointedness of the ideal of the 'properly public' remains highly consequential today, perhaps more so than it has ever been, which is why I argue that we must carefully examine the political exigencies of the desire for sovereign identity. The politics of subjectivity doesn't begin with the nation, and it doesn't stop at the international law awaiting to be put to work on behalf of the human being as such, as some of Derrida's interventions might be read to suggest. Rather, the scale of the international marks the outer boundaries of the political arrangement that productively feeds the phantasmagoria of the subject. That which seems to be our only option to save 'humanity,' whatever that might be taken to mean, answers to the same logic that paradoxically works to legitimate dehumanization. This holds, for instance, when people are put in danger by states' interventions, be they domestic, with states individually going against particular citizens in the name of particular citizenship, or international, with states collectively acting on behalf of 'human-citizens' against some others who refuse to be properly citizens *and* properly humans. And this also holds, it seems, when danger comes from the intervention being the lack thereof, as some events in the so-called migration crisis might attest.

In light of this, this essay is a call to action too. A call, more specifically, for the diligent analysis of the political work underlying any *locus* from which one ventures to speak with-

out trembling after a 'we' in whose name promises are issued. The boundaries intimately connected to assumptions about subjectivity might be powerful, but they are by no means all-encompassing. They always *remain* open to critique, even if questioning them cannot do away with the violence of language, nor be less provisional than the practices that allow for the strategic effect of their resolute presence. Yet another effort to live with the specters, if you will, my comrade-heiress.

Without International

Victor Coutinho Lage

Specters of Marx has been often considered Jacques Derrida's first lengthy and awaited (for many, belated) explicit engagement with Karl Marx and with Marxism(s).⁶ It came out in the wake of a yet another death-decree of 'Marx(ism)' combined with a conjuration of 'communism.' The text situates itself in face, among other things, of the rise of neoliberalism and its apparatus of capture through debt; of the triumphant proclamations of the 'end of history' and the alleged achievements of liberal democracy; and of the then-unprecedented levels of inequality and violence (including of a nationalist kind). If one shares these concerns at least to some degree, it is hard not to sense that things have gotten even worse since the book's publication. Now, it seems even more *urgent* to make justice to *Specters'* call for a modality of problematization that resists injunctions to *ready-made* and *accelerated* conclusions, even if phenomena often named as 'the rise of fascism'; 'the rise of the extreme right'; 'the supremacy' or 'the end of neoliberalism'; 'the crisis of democracy'; and/or 'the crisis of social sciences and humanities' appear to demand *urgent* responses.

My *strategic* engagement below with *Specters* singles out two related aspects: (a) 'prison of ontology' and (a.1) 'without international.'⁷ In the endnotes, my purpose is to refer the reader to some other instances in which Derrida unfolds certain problematizations I will only allude to in this short commentary.

(a) prison of ontology

In his interpretation of *Specters*, Antonio Negri (2008: 8) highlights that it 'introduces us to the new phase of relations in production, to the world of change in the labor paradigm.' Nevertheless, he goes on, 'after having grasped the ontological element of this mutation,' 'deconstruction' would have 'immerse[d] itself anew in a transcendental continuum' (Negri 2008: 8). By doing that (or, by having this done to itself), it ends up providing only a 'moral protest,' terribly unsuited to the experience of the political in face of the 'new productive reality' (Negri 2008: 10, 8). Derrida would not have led 'deconstruction' onto a

'new – post-deconstructive – ontology' (Negri 2008: 12). Hence, claims Negri, it remained 'prisoner of an ineffectual and exhausted definition of ontology' and Derrida, 'a prisoner of the ontology he critiques' (Negri 2008: 12-13).

Derrida comments on Negri's imprisonment at the very end of 'Marx & Sons':

why this figure of the *prison*, today? Why would the presupposition of an ontology be carceral? And, above all, is Negri incapable of imagining that one can *also* be the prisoner of ontology in general (old or new)? That one can be imprisoned in a discourse on the *on*, on the present-being as such? And that what is 'exhausted' is not one or another definition of ontology, but ontology itself, at least if one continues to assign ontology the minimal, non-arbitrary sense that is, as it were, inscribed in the word 'ontology': the discourse (or science or *ratio*) bearing on the *present-being as such*? (Derrida 2008b: 269, n.89)⁸

Taking into account this Negri-Derrida exchange on 'prison' and 'ontology',⁹ I propose below an interaction between Derrida and a chain of imprisonments linked to international relations theory. Before that, however, a few more words on the question of the prison of ontology, this time addressing directly *Specters*.

In the book, Derrida (1993: 31) problematizes a certain relation of *hauntology* to the 'ontology or thinking of Being.' This 'logic of haunting,' he says, 'would be not merely larger and more powerful' than this ontology, but would also 'harbor within itself, but like circumscribed places or particular effects, eschatology and theology themselves' (Derrida 1993: 31). The logic of ontology – or, the ontological response – operates through the exorcism of spectre(s). This is a mode of reaction (not exclusive to reactionary, conservative and/or right-wing positioning, to be sure) that aims at ultimately exorcizing spectrality [*spectralité*] itself in the name of Being, of present-being as such, of an identity identical to itself. Nevertheless, the ultimate act of exorcism – that is, its completion – is impossible, since exorcism itself is possible only in conjunction/disjunction with the logic of haunting.

Let me put this in a different way. One could consider the *end* of exorcism in a double sense. On the one hand, the end as a goal: exorcism aims at eradicating spectres in the name of the actuality of Being. On the other hand, the end as a completion: once spectres manifested in one way or another get eradicated, exorcism ends. Yet, exorcism is only (conceived as) possible once spectres are thought to be haunting Being in the very beginning; that is to say, once they are thought to be on the way of Being towards its reconciliation with itself, with its presence as such, with its nature, with its ontology. Hence, the logic on haunting is inseparable from the logic of ontology: the former makes possible the latter at the same *time* that it makes the latter's logical completion impossible.

Specters exposes a *certain way* of responding to the times¹⁰ In Derrida's (1993: 88) words: 'A time of the world, today, in these times, a new "world order" seeks [makes effort to, searches for, *cherche*] to stabilize a new, necessarily new disturbance [*derangement, dérèglement*] by installing an unprecedented form of hegemony. It is a matter, then, but as always, of a novel form of war.' This 'very novel and so ancient' (Derrida 1993: 88) war

occurs through the conjuration of that (*anyone? anything?*) which spectralizes and which does not belong to ontology, but to hauntology. The latter is a category taken 'as irreducible, and first of all to everything [*d'abord à tout*] it makes possible: ontology, theology, positive or negative onto-theology' (Derrida 1993: 89). Addressing spectrality this way – in an other-than-ontological response – is the task hauntology poses in face of this very novel and so ancient form of war instantiated, by the time *Specters* was conceived, as the 'new world order' – the expression may be outdated, but many of the phenomena linked to it are as haunting as ever, perhaps more haunting than ever.

Among the ten plagues of the 'new world order' Derrida names (1993: 134-139), I wish to comment on one in particular: 'For above all, above all, one would have to analyse the present state of international law and of its institutions' (Derrida 1993: 138). These institutions 'suffer from at least two limits': on the one side, they depend on a 'certain historical culture,' indissociably related to 'European philosophical concepts,' remarkably the concept of state and national sovereignty; on the other side, the application of international law remains 'largely dominated by particular nation-states' (Derrida 1993: 138). It is in relation to this plague that I wish to propose an interaction with international relations theory along a certain chain of (ontological) imprisonments.

Justin Rosenberg notes that international relations is still thought as a field devoted to the study of an ontological domain defined by the alleged absence of centralized authority. This way, having an identity conceived as subordinate to political science and deriving its premises from it, theorizations in international relations would be in 'the *prison* of political science' (Rosenberg 2016: 3-8, emphasis added). Along with this imprisonment, one could recall Ulrich Beck's claim that modern social sciences must be problematized in terms of their 'methodological nationalism,' according to which the national arrangement of political and social action gets converted into a scientific premise. With that, 'much of social science is a *prisoner* of the nation-state' (Beck 2003: 454, emphasis added). Also, as David Blaney and Arlene Tickner suggest, the imprisonment of the field of international relations – and, as Beck notes, of modern social sciences more generally – refers not so much to an academic institutional space, but more profoundly to a certain conception of politics and sovereignty underlying it. As an instantiation of how modernity centralizes political life within the state and under the aegis of state sovereignty, the field of international relations has 'sustained its modern-, White-, masculine-, state- and Western-centric identity by invisibilizing some of its key facets' and, in this sense, has remained in 'the *prison* of colonial modernity' (Blaney and Tickner 2017: 73-74, emphasis added). In sum, this chain of imprisonments indicates that the prison of ontology approached in the exchange between Derrida and Negri resonates with, and gets reproduced by, colonial modernity and a certain way of theorizing international relations.

(The chain of supplementary imprisonments are not exhausted and does not come full circle by the ones I pointed out above. I highlighted only those here *for strategic reasons...*)

Recall that, to Derrida, 'international institutions' suffer from limits related to the bind of 'European philosophical concepts' with 'nation-states.' To pose that 'international institutions' are limited by 'nation-States' is for sure crucial to the interpretation of the imprisonments at stake in what binds ontology with politics. It is crucial as well to thinking ontology and politics otherwise. *However, my wager is that the limits posed by 'the international' itself should be addressed.* I am not suggesting that Derrida claims 'the international' as a way out of the prison of ontology, but that, *while Specters takes it as limited by state sovereignty, it does not take it as limiting as well, that is, as that which poses limits.*¹¹

R. B. J. Walker has been questioning over the years the conditions of possibility and impossibility of political life in what has come to be named modernity. His texts problematize both the efforts promising stabilization or progress within 'the international' and those promising ways out of it. As he puts it recently, 'the problems that are named in the concept of an international reach much further than any particular discipline' (Walker et al 2018: 2). In face of that, to rush into new methods-cum-techniques as self-evident solutions and to chase after there where practices are supposedly really taking place would be problematic. I am not saying wrong, but problematic. And doubly so.

On the one side, it risks evading crucial questions regarding 'ontology, epistemology, axiology, and politics, and, thus, about what counts as productive question or coherent conceptualization'; relatedly, it risks evading the problematization of what counts as 'the international,' therefore reproducing what Walker names as 'methodological internationalism' (Walker et al 2018: 2-3). As I suggested, when it comes more specifically to international relations theory, the prison of political science relates to the prison of the nation-state, which relates to the prison of colonial modernity, which relates to the prison of methodological internationalism. The evasions become imprisonments. Prison evasion, evasion to prison.

But then, *how* is 'the international' also that which limits (and not only that which is limited)? The ten plagues named by Derrida point to phenomena that one way or another exceed the boundaries of the 'nation-state' and exceed the taming capacity of 'state sovereignty.' They exceed them, they haunt them, which is very different from stating that they dissolve them. *However, it would also be crucial to conceive that these phenomena expose a certain politics of 'the international.'* In what came to be named modernity, the condition of possibility for states even to limit the operation of the international is given also by the international as the realm within which the states can legitimately operate.

In this sense, the international exposes a bind of politics to ontology to the extent that it conditions what is conceived as modernity upon a 'proper relationship *between* a particular form of particularism/pluralism in the sovereign nation-state and a particular form of commonality/universality in the international system of sovereign nation-states. Consequently, problems arising from a politics of the international cannot be attributed to particularism or to pluralism alone' (Walker 2010: 4). In other words, *there is a proper relation between states once the international is conceived as the only legitimate place for states to interact and, therefore, for modern politics to take place.* By posing a certain relation between states as being *proper* – as that which both *belongs* and *is adequate* to it

– the international operates as a limit to state sovereignty as well, and as a limit to what is conceived as modern politics. From within this specific operation of the logic of ontology, ‘there can be nothing outside the international because the international encompasses everything that is within the modern world’ (Walker 2006: 58). Imprisoning becomes part of this operation.

This way of imprisoning works, on the one hand, as an attempt at preserving within the international that which is taken as already internalized to its *proper* operation. In this sense, the logic of development and progress is an instantiation of what *Specters* refers to as the circumscribed places and particular effects linked to eschatology and teleology in the logic of ontology. On the other hand, the imprisonment works as an attempt at assimilating or eradicating everything one conceived as a threat to the *proper* operation of the international. In this sense, exceptionalisms decreed from the international can be interpreted as forms of conjuration of that which haunts its operation, of that which is conceived as not properly human, as barbaric, as pre-modern, and/or as non-modern. In sum, if it is indeed the case that the international is limited in large part by the domination of particular states, it is also the case that the states are limited in large part by the international. There is an ‘aporetic relation between state sovereignty and the demands of the states system that makes any claim to state sovereignty possible’ (Walker 2016: 74).

Now, while I think Derrida does not provide enough attention to this aporetic relation, I would also suggest that by only identifying it one runs the risk of reproducing the logic of ontology and its prison to colonial modernity. Pointing out how this aporia invariably imprisons those attempts at escaping it can end up reinforcing an ontological response to spectrality.

Should Derrida have been more haunted by the international? How could we (who is this ‘we?’) address spectrality in relation to the aporetic relation just mentioned? How could spectrality be thought as that which exceeds ‘the international’?

(I have inherited from Walker the haunting injunction that a better ontology does not lead necessarily to a better politics. The logic of haunting, as Derrida addresses it, is neither a new ontology nor an escape from ontology. Spectrality exceeds the prison of ontology and ontological responses, including those under the name of the international. In face of that, which *strategies* can one mobilize?)

(a.1) *without international*

I wish to take ‘the international’ now from a different, albeit related angle. In *Specters*, it is affirmed that a ‘new International’ is being sought in face of ‘an effective inequality as monstrous as that which prevails today, greater than ever in the history of humanity’ (Derrida 1993: 141). This ‘new International’ is being woven, according to him, through a link [*lien*] that is ‘untimely and without status, without title and without name, barely public even if it is not clandestine, without contract, “out of joint,” without coordination, without party, without country, without national community (International before, across, and beyond any national determination), without co-citizenship, without common belonging

to a class' (Derrida 1993: 141-142). 'Without' does not mean the categories mentioned should be abandoned or no longer deserve consideration. Rather, the point is thinking an experience of the political and of political *strategies* that is not founded on, or previously conditioned by, an ontological response to spectrality.

In *Specters*, this point is unfolded through a discussion on the notion of the 'messianic' (see also Derrida 1994a, 1999). A 'messianic affirmation' is 'a certain experience of the promise that one can try to liberate from any dogmatics and even from any metaphysico-religious determination, from any messianism' (Derrida 1993: 147). Messianicity, as spectrality, exceeds the logic of ontology, therefore also of teleology and eschatology. In 'Marx & Sons,' Derrida delimits a discontinuity between 'messianicity' and the Benjaminian tradition. The former is dissociated from any Jewish messianism and all other forms of Judaism, even if it does not necessarily reject them or even a Judeo-Christian tradition (Derrida 2008b: 250-1). Messianicity 'no longer has *any* essential connection with what messianism may be taken to mean' (Derrida 2008b: 251). Moreover, it is not bound to a particular history or culture; it can be interpreted as a 'universal, quasi-transcendental structure' (Derrida 2008b: 254).

Derrida addresses then the question of whether the use of 'messianicity' would be at odds with the notion of a 'universal structure,' due to its 'ultimate affiliation with one language, one culture and one "revelation"' (Derrida 2008b: 254). He provides then an 'essentially *strategic* response' (Derrida 2008b: 254, italics added). Messianicity, on the one hand, would have 'rhetorical and pedagogical value,' since it makes reference to a 'familiar cultural landscape'; on the other hand, and more profoundly, Derrida finds it 'hard to decide' whether messianicity 'precedes and conditions' every historically determined figure of messianism *or* whether the very possibility of thinking messianicity comes from within a certain history and culture (Derrida 2008b: 254, 255; cf. Derrida 1996). How much, or to what extent, messianicity is tied to a particular, European and Judeo-Christian culture? Derrida has no definitive decision on that. Neither do I. Perhaps it is undecidable, profoundly political.

Deconstruction is linked to a fundamentally political theory-practice. Thought through 'messianicity,' as it is in *Specters*, deconstruction 'does not paralyze any decision, any affirmation, any responsibility. On the contrary, it grants them their elementary condition. It is their very experience' (Derrida 1993: 269). Thinking a 'new international' in terms of messianicity and spectrality requires a problematization of the notion of critique. More precisely, it requires its radicalization through a call for an 'interminable self-critique' (Derrida 1993: 146), a critique that is political precisely to the (infinite) extent that it exceeds the logic of ontology. Deconstruction, in this sense, is a call for other-than-ontological-responses in face of spectres. The importance of strategy is linked precisely to a political action that is necessarily theoretical-practical. A radicalized critique problematizes the very centrality of the figure of the 'human' that has been thought as the condition of possibility of all critique. When it comes to the name of modernity, radical critique addresses (itself to) the very foundations of what has been carried forward in name of 'Man,' 'State,' 'International.' The 'new international,' in this sense, is woven through a link that is also *without international*.

A final supplement. While it would be problematic for one with my inheritance to hope for an easy escape from the ‘European and Judeo-Christian culture’ Derrida refers to, I think the times require at least three careful considerations related to that. First, attention is needed to all the various ways through which the defence of this ‘culture’ has been mobilized in reactionary, violent and/or nostalgic modalities, within and without academic circles, from social media to Palestinian concentration camps, by political leaders and movements alike. Second, the figure of the Messiah requires special attention in times of proliferating assemblages and discriminations combining and displacing movements that aim at incorporating its ultimate arrival through racialized, sexualized, gendered, and authoritarian-cum-democratic political configurations, thereby rearticulating the neoliberalism whose rise Derrida was facing. Finally, coming from within a certain ‘Brazilian’ history and culture, the ‘new international’ is perhaps woven through other links. Why not explore the pedagogical and, above all, *strategic* value of, for instance, a *cannibalicity without cannibalism* or a *quilombicity without quilombism*? I promise to get back to that in opportunities to come...¹²

Notas

- 1 [Note by Auchter] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this point.
- 2 [Note by Auchter] This statement specifically applies to Rousseau’s writings, however it can be more broadly considered here. Indeed the discourse meant to educate the public, rather than the educational system itself, seeks to codify citizenship within individuals such that they develop a sense of self, an identity which coheres with that of the state.
- 3 [Note by Auchter] As he notes, one of the biggest obstacles to the encounter with the ghost is the very idea of scholarship itself, which begins with looking and believes ‘looking is sufficient’ (Derrida 1994c: 11). Therefore such scholars ‘are not always in the most competent position to do what is necessary: speak to the specter’ (Derrida 1994c: 11).
- 4 [Note by Meireles] The original expression comes from the political pamphlet ‘hidden’ in Marquis de Sade’s *Philosophy in the Bedroom* (1990), entitled ‘Yet another effort, Frenchmen, if you would become Republicans!’ Derrida played on this injunction in his book *Cosmopolites de tous les pays, encore un effort!* (1997). Although the book was translated to English under the title *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2005a), Peter Szendy (2013) suggests the translation of the original title as ‘Cosmopolitans of all lands, yet another effort!’
- 5 [Note by Meireles] I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for pointing this out, and for encouraging me to engage with the different inflections Derrida gives to ‘resistance’ in *Resistances to Psychoanalysis* (1998).
- 6 [Note by Lage] It is worth noting, however, Derrida’s (1972b) earlier engagement with Marxism. *Spectres de Marx: l’État de la dette, le travail de deuils et la nouvelle Internationale* (1993) was published in Portuguese as *Espectros de Marx: o estado da dívida, o trabalho do luto e a nova internacional* (1994a). All translations here are mine. This text is dedicated to Evando Nascimento, to whom I am *incalculably indebted*.
- 7 [Note by Lage] The *strategic* aspects of ‘deconstruction’ have been frequently raised by Derrida. In *Of Grammatology*, for instance: ‘If words and concepts receive meaning only in sequences of differences, one can justify one’s language and one’s choice of terms, only within a topic and an historical *strategy* [...] [The justification] corresponds to a condition of forces and translates an historical calculation’ (Derrida [1967] 1997: 70, emphasis added). For another take on ‘deconstruction’ and ‘ontology’ explicitly attentive to its strategic aspects, see Derrida (1972a: 162-3).

- 8 [Note by Lage] The importance of 'strategy' for Derrida comes again in the continuation of the text: 'Of course, if one is prepared to question, in all its forms, this reference, in the word "ontology," to the *present-being*, *properly present* and as such (real, concrete, actual, etc.), while arbitrarily, or for *strategic* reasons, deciding to make the word express something entirely different in the hope that this terminological decision will produce some sort of emancipatory effect, then so be it; I have nothing against the word itself. But the result will be another word, or an encrypted word' (Derrida 2008b: 269, n.89, emphasis added to 'strategic').
- 9 [Note by Lage] One of the anonymous reviewers noted another nuance to this notion of imprisonment, recalling that Negri himself was imprisoned in 1979 in Italy accused of 'armed insurrection against the powers of the state.' From this reminder, to which I am indebted, it occurred me that Derrida also got imprisoned in 1981 in Czechoslovakia accused of 'producing, trafficking and transferring drugs,' although the main reason for his imprisonment was Derrida's involvement with a clandestine seminar carried forward by an educational foundation supporting Czech dissidents (see Peeters 2013: 332-341). These imprisonments, under different modalities of political violence and political regimes, are telling of what is at stake in the need to problematize ontological responses to spectrality.
- 10 [Note by Lage] For more on the importance of 'in a certain way' to Derrida, see Butler's introduction and Spivak's afterword in Derrida (2016).
- 11 [Note by Lage] Derrida's (2008a, 2010) last seminars conduct a problematization of sovereignty. For his reflections upon the relation between 'sovereignty' and 'international,' see Derrida (2005b) and Borradori (2003).
- 12 [Note by Lage] I am currently writing a series of texts on Cannibalism, Amerindian perspectivism, Quilombism and Amerfricanity as theorizations of international relations.

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Sobre a Espectralidade do Inter-estado-ual/ Internacional: Um Fórum sobre os Espectros de Marx de Jacques Derrida depois de 25 anos, Parte III

Resumo: Jacques Derrida entregou a base de os *Espectros de Marx: O Estado da Dívida, a Obra do Luto e a Nova Internacional* como discurso plenário na conferência 'Para onde o marxismo?', na Universidade da Califórnia, em Riverside, em 1993. A versão mais longa do livro foi publicada em francês no mesmo ano e em inglês e português no ano seguinte. Uma década após a publicação dos Espectros, as análises de Derrida provocaram uma grande literatura crítica e convidaram tanto a consternação quanto a celebração de figuras como Antonio Negri, Wendy Brown e Frederic Jameson. Este fórum procura estimular novas reflexões sobre Derrida, desconstrução e Espectros de Marx, considerando como futuro do passado anunciado pelo livro se saiu depois de um movimentado quarto de século. Nesse terceiro grupo de contribuições, Jessica Auchter, Bruna Holstein Meireles e Victor Coutinho Lage recorrem amplamente aos escritos de Derrida para explorar a espectralidade do internacional ou inter-estado-ual: da própria política baseada na hospitalidade em direção ao fantasma como hóspede estrangeiro, da possibilidade de encenar uma política de espectralidade que pudesse aspirar a um novo tipo de universalidade, e de como um 'sem internacional' poderia escapar à série de prisões que constitui o internacional.

Palavras-chave: Derrida, Jacques; espectralidade; estrangeiros; hospitalidade; subjetividade; soberania; política moderna; internacional; lógicas carcerárias; Negri, Antonio.

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ERRATUM

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