

Derrida's Earth: A Topography of World, Earth, and Khôra

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Abstract

In this paper, I develop a topography of Derrida's concepts of earth, world, and *khôra* in order to better map out, triangulate, and ultimately understand Derrida's thought of the earth both as a response to Heidegger's earth and on his own terms. In Heidegger, earth is what presents itself as concealed in the disclosure of Being, it is what resists intelligible analysis. Derrida argues that there is a more anterior earth than this one that presents itself in the disclosure of Being.

Derrida's earth can only be recognized in the trace of passive alterity left behind and re-inherited when the world and earth are continuously deferred and re-differentiated from one another. This anterior earth is pointed to only in the ways Being is vulnerable to this context of alterity in the differentiation into world and earth, shaping this differentiation without becoming present in itself. For Derrida, the disclosure of Being can only happen in the repetition of its sense through the deferral to and differentiation of its elements. This anterior earth can only be disclosed through differentiation, and thus cannot become present in itself, not because any particular part of it cannot ever be uncovered, but because the very way it comes to be disclosed as Being is through this repetition of differentiation that changes Being even as it is gathered. The "site" which receives this world anew in each deferral and differentiation is *khôra*.

Recently, some scholars have been developing approaches to Derrida's work that refocus his philosophy from linguistic application into a broader, ecological perspective.¹ This paper seeks to add to that approach by better understanding Derrida's use of the concept of "earth" (*la terre*) within what I call a "topography" of three interrelated concepts across his work: earth, world, and *khôra*. Topography here refers to a constellation between these three concepts as it keeps them conceptually distinct even while they interact. Of the three, *khôra* might be the most unfamiliar term. It is a concept Derrida takes up from Plato's *Timaeus* meaning "place" in the original Greek.² In our topography, *khôra* will form the receptacle for the "spacing out" (*espacement*) of the world as it expands through new differentiations in its deferral to all others, which as the contextual environment of the world forms the earth. Although attention has already been given to Derrida's use of world, earth, and *khôra* independently across his works, an explication of the three in a topography has not explicitly been made before now.³ This is not too surprising as nowhere within Derrida's discussions of *khôra* are earth and world directly mentioned as concepts which *khôra* receives. Nonetheless, I will try to show that the relationship between earth and world does have many important conceptual similarities to the concepts he does mention *khôra* receives. Through this topography, I will argue that we can better understand Derrida's claim against Heidegger that the earth might not open,⁴ his long-standing complaint that Heidegger's Being, as world disclosure, stresses gathering and unity over and above differentiation,⁵ and his claim that *différance* is "older" than Being.⁶ All of which helps us better understand why inscribing earth and world within *khôra* forms a useful conceptual topography of an ecological view of Derrida's philosophy.

In the first section, we will begin by examining Heidegger's account of the relation between earth and world in order to understand Derrida's response and his own versions of

them.⁷ Then, we will begin to lay the framework for Derrida's topography by going over his interpretation of *khôra*. Derrida's taking up of *Khôra*, I argue following Caputo, is the site which processes and receives Derrida's *différance*, the necessary repetition of deferral and differentiation of the elements in a network for its disclosure.⁸

In the second section, we will move into a close reading of Derrida's use of the term "earth" itself, especially in response to Heidegger, and then situate it within world and *khôra* to deepen our framework for this topography. It will be found that Derrida's earth is not simply what conceals itself as the background to the world as Heidegger has it, but is the trace of an inheritance of many degrees of concealment which are open to a differentiation that might always leave in reserve some of this concealment, the trace of an earth that can no longer be called an unconcealment. Derrida's anterior earth before Heidegger's opposition of earth and world would name the inherence of the trace of a (non-)substance in-between and before the two become differentiated.

Finally, in the third section, our topography will be laid out in full after an exploration of *khôra* and earth's relationship to time. Here, we enter into the thought of the promised earth "to-come," as the impossible thought of its future differentiations and linked to taking responsibility for the earth before earth/world. *Khôra* names the place which spaces out and receives the continuing deferral and differentiation of all beings as only through *différance* in a time before time. The earth will be found to live on through the passing down of this inheritance from one being to another, "as if" they shared a world. The passing down of this anterior earth cannot be experienced as such, but only through a vulnerability to *différance*. This topography will then be compared to other interpretations in order to show what makes it unique and useful among them.

§1 *Khôra*

In order to contextualize the topography of Derrida's concepts of earth, world, and *khôra*, we will first need to understand Heidegger's concepts of world and earth. Heidegger's world is the place of our phenomenological "being-there" (*Dasein*), the disclosure of gathered intelligibility as described in his *Being and Time*.⁹ Rather than a choice between idealism, materialism, or a dualism of the two, Heidegger begins with our already being within a world of beings, without assigning the labels 'ideal' or 'material' to what appears there.¹⁰ Thus, when we discuss his use of the term earth, we must be careful not to think of it as the 'material' side of a standard dichotomy of the substances of ideal and material. Rather, Heidegger's earth is the resting-within-itself of all things in their presentation to us as concealed from intelligibility. As Heidegger writes, "[The earth] shows itself only when it remains undisclosed and unexplained. [...] The self-seclusion of earth, however, is not a uniform, inflexible staying under cover, but unfolds itself in an inexhaustible variety of simple modes and shapes."¹¹ The earth is what remains undisclosed and unexplained from within the intelligibility of the world, but in an inexhaustible variety of sensations, elements, and simple particulars in their own singularities of experience that remain inexplicable. Heidegger's earth, then, refers in particular to this concealed background upon which the intelligibility of the world stands out against, even if it can only be understood as "self-secluding," a background that presents itself only as a withdrawal or a kind of "jutting out."¹²

The early Greeks called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *physis*. It illuminates also that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the *earth*. What this word says is not to be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere, or with the merely astronomical idea of a planet. Earth is that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises as such.¹³

For Heidegger, Being holds sway as the strife between world and earth, where the structured world within the horizons of our intelligibility opens us to the conditions of its ground only through their self-seclusion.¹⁴ The work of art gives us an opportunity to experience the richness of the earth by bringing out the interplay of foreground and background. It does this through materials such as the rich pigment of paint or the strong marble or a statue, highlighting the concealment of the inexplicable earthly character of these scenes, which backgrounds the intelligible synthesis of the world.¹⁵ In “setting up” (*Aufstellen*) its world, the origin of the work of art simultaneously “sets forth” (*Herstellen*) the earth in recognition of its resistance to full explicability in the world, drawing back into itself the richness of experience.¹⁶ Heidegger uses the example of a pair of peasant shoes in a painting by Van Gogh to illustrate his thought of the earth.

In the shoe vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintery field. This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining worry as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, the trembling before the impending childbed and the shivering at the surrounding menace of death. This equipment belongs to the *earth*, and it is protected in the *world* of the peasant woman. From out of this protected belonging, the equipment itself rises to its resting-within-itself.¹⁷

The artwork is not a representation looking to be a copy of some presentation, but rather tries to uncover more of the ways in which we could interact with its subject in such a way that gives shape in our mind to the objects it presents in their rich and reclusive forms. In the painting, we not only or even first see a flat collection of brushstrokes, but open our memory and self to the scene depicted through its richness in an opening up of this memory and experience

towards further unconcealment of the subject. Through this self-seclusion we are presented an earth from within the world that remains outside it, resting-within-itself.

But there is a problem with this concept of earth. Where Heidegger has it that human beings share a world through language, our shared anticipation of death, and even a shared sense of the concealment of the earth, all in all, a shared capacity for world-building (*Weltbildung*), Derrida's acknowledgement of all this as within an anterior context of differentiation disrupts the capacity for the human being to properly build a world "as such." The continuous need for deferral and differentiation leaves the world open to its environment of others in a way that is defined by the change in the interaction of the two that defines their ongoing transformation together. For Derrida, we can no longer be said to properly share an intelligible world within which things self-seclude as its background, but rather, it is in the *disruptions* of our trying to dwell at home in the world that we always *might* open the world and earth in a new differentiation that can no longer be said to be an unconcealment.

Heidegger calls the disclosure of Being the world as it appears "as such." He opposes this form of disclosure to the animal's world, which cannot disclose the world "as such." For Heidegger, the animal is poor in world, the stone is worldless.¹⁸ He writes:

It is true that the rock on which the lizard lies is not given for the lizard *as* rock, in such a way that it could inquire into its mineralogical constitution for example. It is true that the sun in which it is basking is not given for the lizard *as* sun. In such a way that it could ask questions of astrophysics about it and expect to find the answers. But it is not true to say that the lizard merely crops up as present at hand *beside* the rock, *amongst* other things such as the sun for example, in the same way as the stone lying nearby is simply present

at hand amongst other things. On the contrary, the lizard has its own relation to the rock, to the sun, and to a host of other things.¹⁹

Heidegger gives the animals some access to beings such as rocks and the sun in the world, but not as rock, not as sun, not as building a world with Being “as such.”

The animal’s *way of being*, which we call ‘*life*’, is *not without access* to what is around it and about it, to that amongst which it appears as a living being. It is because of this that the claim arises that the animal has an environmental world of its own within which it moves. Through the course of its life the animal is confined to its environmental world, immured as it were within a fixed sphere that is incapable of further expansion or contraction.²⁰

The environmental world of the animal mentioned here is not the same as the earth for the human being. Perhaps something of the earth in terms of sensations does present itself to animals, but not certainly not the earth “as such,” because the disclosure of Being “as such” requires a world in which the earth juts out and is set forth as its background, and the animal is not privy to such a world. It is here, then, that Derrida notices a separation between an earth that is only encountered in the world “as such,” and another sense of earth, perhaps that of the animal (and extending further, to all living things), that involves no world “as such,” but still a shared vulnerability to and undergoing of *différance* as living beings are changed in their environment. Of course, this is amplified in many ways for the human being through things like culture and language, and yet we do come from this history. Derrida’s alternative to the world “as such,” then, is the thought of the inheritance of an environment and inhabitation “as if” humans and animals shared a world. The recognition of the trace this environment leaves within the world

forges a path towards Derrida's re-interpretation of earth, a path that we will have to understand his concept of *différance* in order to tread.²¹

In the most general sense, *différance* refers to meaning coming from the differences between elements in a network over an inherent meaning of the elements themselves. One clear example of this is the meaning of a word in a dictionary being defined only by other words, therefore forming a network of the deferral of meaning which defines words wholly through their differences from one another, and not by their pointing to an outside referent. The pointing to an outside referent, or even the referent of a resistant self-secluding aspect of experience, cannot explain the meaning of a thing outside this self-same identity. If we now think of our world as such a network, then its meaning could be understood in the relationships of difference between its parts. Taking the example of colour, if two people each refer to a color the other cannot see, without referring to other colors, they could not explain this colour as anything but one kind of concealment from self-explication. But if we could refer to many other colors, we could begin to point towards this color in its differences from others, although perhaps not wholly so. While *différance* was first introduced by Derrida within a networks of signs, our purpose here is to bring its logic to bear on his thought of the earth. This is possible because that very same logic of the priority of deferral and difference can be applied to a more basic history of differentiation, including DNA, evolution, and so forth.²² The trace that is left by this process gives us a hint towards an earth that cannot become present in itself, but which can be pointed to as the context which the world inherits, and in each repetition of *différance*, is that passivity which supports the transformation of the world. In the deferral of sense through beings in the world, we are always opened to the contextual environment of others. No origin that presents itself "as such" can be given to this process, except the recognition of the trace left of the function of *différance* itself.

Heidegger's earth as a concealment of all things in accordance with themselves does not do enough to recognize the contingency by which these beings arose, and the relationship our world still holds to unexpected contingencies. He misses an even more anterior thought of the earth, the earth that does not even appear as a concealment. This earth is inherited with remainder in each iteration of *différance*, impossible to anticipate, a remainder not already inscribed in our current differentiations of earth and world, but which continuously 'reveals' itself re-iteratively in the transformation of *différance*. Thus, Derrida's *physis* remains "the same," only by its repetition that can always change in its inevitable openness to *différance*.

The same, precisely, is *différance* (with an *a*) as the displaced and equivocal passage of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other. Thus one could reconsider all the pairs of opposites on which philosophy is constructed and on which our discourse lives, not in order to see opposition erase itself but to see what indicates that each of the terms must appear as the *différance* of the other, as the other different and deferred in the economy of the same [...] *physis*, *technê*, *nomos*, *thesis*, society, freedom, history, mind, etc. – as *physis* different and differed or as *physis* differing and deferring. *Physis* in *différance*.²³

"*Physis* in *différance*" can now be read as Derrida's response to Heidegger's earth in the dual striving of earth/world. Heidegger's earth now is a latecomer to the trace of an inheritance of an earth anterior to this and always subject to the process of *différance*, which changes the idea of a 'self-growth' of *physis* into a repetition that moves through time with its own disruption and growing differentiation. In every deferral of *différance*, the differentiation of the world must be re-knotted in a process that reveals its own scars. As Hobson writes,

[t]he interruption leaves its marks, but otherwise. Knotted threads are formed in it, recapturing the tears but otherwise. They allow the discontinuous to appear in its trace, but since the trace is not to be reassembled into its appearance, it can always resemble the trace which discontinuity leaves within the logical discourse.²⁴

The benefit of Derrida's argument is his ability to make us better aware of the necessity of thinking the discontinuous in the world, to open oneself to the earth and the possibility of disruption by the environment. Thus, for Derrida, part of what replaces Heidegger's concealment of the earth is *différance* itself in its expansion, which is *khôra* in our topography. This happens through the spacing out of a

common root, which is not the concealment of the origin and which is not common because it does not amount to the same thing except with the unmonotonous insistence of difference, this unnameable movement of *difference-itself*, that I have strategically nicknamed *trace*, *reserve*, or *différance* [...].²⁵

Différance names the way in which this un-nameable, unexpected, and un-gatherable interruption of the world must be always be thought 'with' the world, but as a 'with' that is the very disruption of Being, of the discontinuous in Being. For Derrida, the earth will include the trace all others leave behind of their having been formed out of the differentiation and re-knitting of the world.

With *différance* explained, we are now prepared for a close reading of *khôra* as its site. We will focus on his essay entitled "*Khôra*" where he cites Plato's *khôra* as naming a "third genus, [...] between sense and non-sense, inside and outside, activity and passivity."²⁶ As a third place between these binaries, it names the site of their interaction, between each side of the binaries and the unrepresentable field from which they are differentiated. This same logic of an

intermediary place should work between the world and earth as we have been discussing them, even though they cannot be said to be a binary opposition in Heidegger, by allowing *khôra* to describe the ongoing function of *différance* between earth and world. Caputo gives a summary of this connection:

If *différance* is what deconstruction is all about, in a nutshell, then “*khôra* is its surname” (*Khôra* 95/126). To deploy a famous Platonic image: the story of *khôra* works like an “allegory” of *différance*, each addressing a common, kindred non-essence, impropriety, and namelessness.²⁷

Derrida himself writes the following on *khôra*:

Rich, numerous, inexhaustible, the interpretations come, in short, to give form to the meaning of *khôra*. They always consist in *giving form* to it by determining it, it which, however, can "offer itself" or promise itself only by removing itself from any determination, from all the marks or impressions to which we say it is exposed: from everything which we would like give to it without hoping to receive anything from it.²⁸

In our topography, the distinction of *khôra* from earth lies in *khôra*'s ability to receive every inscription of form, spacing out the results of ongoing *différance*. It is nothing but this receptivity to this process and its results, not even a 'receptacle' if this means a determinate place or thing. “[This discourse on the *khôra*] all seems to happen just *as if* - and the *as if* is important to us here - the fracture of this abyss were announced in a muted and subterranean way, preparing and propagating in advance its simulacra and *mises en abyme*.”²⁹ Derrida's *khôra* as the site of *différance* cannot not be thought as having any essential determinations, but receives the new transformations of world and earth. Heidegger argues the animal's experience is limited to its instincts without gathering into a spatio-temporal world. The animal lacks a real sense of

anticipation of its future death through the ending of the futures it projects for itself, and a recollective (not just habit-building) memory of its past. This “muted and subterranean” discourse on the *khôra* gives us a way to think of the way the anterior earth before earth/world can transformatively propagate itself further and further outwards in a series of “*mises en abyme*.” It is here a thought of something shared between humans and other living things, but not “as such” – a shared vulnerability to *différance* that is not the sharing of the presence of a world, but a shared opening “as if” we shared a world in sharing the inheritance of his interruptive environment.

Khôra is “the anachrony of being.”³⁰ It is the (non-)ground of Being in the sense of its being the site for the continuous deferral and differentiation of our sense of the world but nonetheless forms our shared vulnerability “as if” we shared a world. Without any reality of its own, *khôra* precedes without preceding, in a time without time, in anachrony. Derrida makes this point by discussing Plato’s metaphor of the *khôra* as “a virgin wax”:

Now what is *represented* by a virgin wax, a wax that is always virgin, absolutely preceding any possible impression, always older, because atemporal, than everything that seems to affect it in order to take form *in it*, in it which *receives*, nevertheless, and in it which, for the same reason, is always younger, infant even, achronic and anachronistic, so indeterminate that it does not even justify the name and the form of wax?³¹

The status of *khôra* as virgin wax, a being always older because it is atemporal, refers to its form of (non-)existence anterior to the structures of time and space, which are constructed in the world. No intelligible structures can be assigned to it in itself, and yet it names an anteriority that withholds this reserve, the reserve that opens to the world in its contextual interaction with the self-secluding earth. Through *khôra*, Derrida begins to find a path beyond Heidegger’s earth

by going towards the site of *différance* as an ongoing process whose trace connects us to a subterranean *mise en abyme* of a shared vulnerability to *différance*.

§2: Earth

With the outline of our topography established, we can now turn to Derrida's own use of earth. We will pass over important references to the earth in *The Origin of Geometry: An Introduction* and *Glas* which are engagements with Husserl and Hegel respectively, in order to focus on his more original interpretation of the earth in his later philosophy, especially those that engage with Heidegger.

A good place to start can be found in *Points... Interviews, 1974-1994*. In one interview, he discusses the memorization of a poem by heart, expanding this notion to a wider context related to the poetic sense of the world in which we find ourselves. The kind of depth that occurs in memorization "by heart" is not clearly a gain of greater intelligibility, but neither is it simply more richness of the self-secluding aspects of Being. What comes up from the repeating of a poem by heart is something not fully understood nor controlled by us and can be expanded to a thought of the poetic experience of our surroundings, thinking of it as both the unconcealment of intelligibility and that rich resistance that retreats from it in concealment. In the interview, he says, "[y]ou have to celebrate, you have to commemorate amnesia, savagery, even the stupidity of the "by heart"; the Hedgehog."³² We must celebrate the hedgehog as a metaphor for that richness and mixture at the edge of the world that forms its unrepeatable signature, including the deepening of a memorization "by heart" which is at the same time a stupidity and amnesia. It is what forms in the poem and the poetic scene its spellbinding intermixture of intelligible form with raw earthiness, a richness at the border between world and earth as both and neither at once. The stupidity of the "by heart" enriches the poem not through an account of its every

interpretation, nor a thorough research of its every allusion, etymology, and structure. It is a deepening of an intimate relationship with it that better opens it to changing interpretations. The hedgehog, as an animal that rolls itself up and makes itself vulnerable, becomes a way for Derrida to “call the poem from now on a certain passion of the singular mark, the signature that repeats its dispersion, each time beyond the *logos*, a-human, barely domestic, [...] close to the earth [...].”³³ The hedgehog is close to the earth as still part of the world. In a poetic viewing of the world, the hedgehog is the passion for the singular, marking that trace in the beings that surround us of being ‘looked at’ by them from a past anterior to our world, a past that cannot be present in our world as what it was, but only in an interpretation. For us, this is an inheritance that includes not only the experiences and memory of our upbringing, but our body, our evolutionary history, the taking up of a culture and language, perhaps even an ancient connection with the formation of the planet earth itself. Derrida says of the hedgehog that it is

very low, is something of the earth that does not open, does not open to the “as such,” an earth without truth in the sense of the verticality of the sky and the open. This earth can always not open. This earth is not necessarily inscribed in the opposition earth/world.³⁴

This something of earth that does not open refers to that aspect of the world in its context of the earth which breaks from expectations in *différance*, an anteriority to the duality of earth/world opposition which cannot be opened in itself “as such,” and yet participates in the differentiation of the world and earth. *Khôra* allows us to think towards the remainder still-to-come, still to be differentiated in order to come into existence. Instead of an origin, *khôra* is the recognition of a readiness to receive the transformation of the “by heart” of the earth/world as it undergoes *différance*.

In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida introduces the concept of the “spectral” alongside references to the earth, a term which might help us refer in a highly qualified way to Derrida’s earth.³⁵ The coming and going of specters will form another way to speak of the inheritance of the earth anterior to the opposition of earth/world – a substance which is not material, not ideal, not spiritual, but which names the trace of beings as they exist in their always remaining yet-to-be-determined. An inheritance which comes to ‘haunt’ the world during its every transformation, always leaving a remainder of this reserve of itself that is never quite fully taken up in any differentiation.

What distinguishes the specter or the *revenant* from the *spirit*, including the spirit in the sense of the ghost in general, is doubtless a supernatural and paradoxical phenomenality, the furtive and ungraspable visibility of the invisible, [...] This spectral *someone other looks at us*, we feel ourselves being looked at by it, outside of any synchrony, even before or beyond any look on our part, according to an *absolute anteriority* [...] and asymmetry according to an absolutely unmasterable disproportion.”³⁶

Derrida’s further withdrawal is the more inoperative, further passivity of that anteriority and otherness that ‘presents’ itself only after the fact in its trace. This absolutely unmasterable disproportion is what is left over after the differentiation into world and earth. Derrida adds “[w]e all live in a world, some would say a culture, that still bears at an incalculable depth, the mark of this inheritance, whether in a directly visible fashion or not.”³⁷ Through the thought of this inheritance of specters, we can come to better grips with the earth before earth/world and *khôra* as its site, as “the radical and necessary heterogeneity of an inheritance, the difference without opposition that has to mark it, [...]. An inheritance is never gathered together, it is never one with itself.”³⁸ Considering this as a response to Heidegger, he writes,

[h]as not Heidegger, as he always does, skewed the asymmetry in favor of what he in effect interprets as the possibility of favor itself, of the accorded favor, namely, of the accord that gathers or collects while harmonizing (*Versammlung, Fug*), be it in the sameness of differents or of disagreements, and before the synthesis of a system.³⁹

We can extend this accusation to Heidegger's presumption that the earth, even while under concealment, is nonetheless *distinct* in its opposition to world. Derrida thinks that once differentiated, earth and world leave a remainder, something in excess of gathered Being, that does not even present itself as earth.

In Derrida's view, "one can never distinguish between the future-to-come and the coming-back of a specter."⁴⁰ That is, one can never distinguish in the coming of the repetition of the world whether it will come back to us as the same world, or whether in its undergoing of *différance*, whether what seems to newly appear is also a coming-back, that the identity of this past and others inherently involves a future-to-come as a coming-back, but perhaps differently. A little further on, Derrida quotes the ghost of Hamlet's father saying that he must keep the secret of his "Prison-House," that place where specters haunt.⁴¹ In a comparison with the earth before earth/world, it too must always keep the secret of how it will come to be re-differentiated into earth and world in its every repetition. In keeping this secret,

[e]very revenant seems here to come from and return to the earth, to come from it as from a buried clandestinity (humus and mold, tomb and subterranean prison), to return to it as to the lowest, toward the humble, humid, humiliated.⁴²

Specters express the constant re-negotiation in the movement of *différance*, coming and going from our world back to the earth in their interplay in the differentiation of earth/world, in it a sense of both earth and world at once, a spectral earth/world.

It is then the last section of *The Gift of Death*, named “*Tout autre est tout autre*” or “every other (one) is every (bit) other,” that helps us to rethink the death of ourselves and others in regards to the earth.⁴³ Here, the difficulty is holding in mind that each encounter with a being in the world is also an encounter with the context of the earth, held together in a particular and peculiar way. The differentiation of world and earth leaves each other in the world as “every bit other,” in the anterior earth before earth/world. This difference between my world and the contexts of its others is “every bit other” in the sense of how it could have differentiated itself from the earth before earth/world in radically different ways. It is here our death, and the death of any other living being, achieves a different kind of status. “The salutation or benediction given at the moment of separation, of departure, sometimes forever (this can never in fact be excluded), without any return on this earth, at the moment of death;”⁴⁴ This “sometimes forever” of death referring to what is truly lost in the singular differentiation of world, the whole world that collapses in their loss.

At this point, we have seen how Derrida has responded to Heidegger’s earth in two ways: first, towards the non-ground of the *khôra*, and now towards our inheritance of an earth before earth/world that was developed further by the spectral and the every bit other of death. The reiterative receptivity of *khôra* helps us to think the earth before the opposition of earth and world as the movement of *différance*. The spectral earth helps us to think the layers of burial and even the real loss that occurs in the death of each living being that can never be recovered. And yet, the dead do leave something behind, even with the loss of their world, for others to inherit. “And this question would be a question of life or death, the question of life-death, before being a question of Being, of essence, or of existence. It would open onto a dimension of irreducible survival [*survivance*] and onto Being and onto some opposition between living and dying.”⁴⁵ The

spectral earth is a field of life-death, life and death together, in the sense of our living through a necessary inheritance of the dead but through a transfer of their world to ours that may have nothing definite in common. An irreducible living-on, after the end of the world as the gathering done by a living being, that is an inheritance passed on through their death and taken up by others - a quasi-material, a spectral material, that is inherited always with a fundamental undecidability between its being a future-to-come or a return. This would be a 'common' earth, "as if" shared as a world, but shared only through each individual being's differentiation, avoiding a too human-centric sense of Being. We must think of the spectral world of life-death as *both* as the taking up of a 'material' context and inheritance, Derrida's earth, and the attempt to refer to and connect together this earth, only possible through the world, after having undergone *différance*.

Finally, we arrive at Derrida's furthest development on the relation between world and earth, his 2002-2003 seminar: *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*. Here is his opening statement on the earth within the seminar:

Men and Beasts have in common the fact of being living beings (whatever the word 'life', *bios*, or *zoe*, might mean, and supposing one has the right to exclude from it, vegetables, plants, and flowers), and whatever the difficulty we have in the thinking, conceiving life, the limits of life, becoming-alive or dead, we can believe that these living beings have in common the finitude of their life, and therefore, among other features of their finitude, their mortality in the place they inhabit, whether one calls that place world or earth (earth including sea and sky) and these places that they inhabit in common, where they co-habit and inhabiting and co-habitive meaning things that are perhaps still problematic [...].⁴⁶

One of Derrida's goal throughout the seminar will be to show how we cannot fully justify Heidegger's separation of animals as being "poor in world" [*weltarm*] and humans as "world-building" [*weltbildend*].⁴⁷ Not because the animal is also world-building, but rather by lifting up the animal's status as being "poor in world" to being shared by all living things in their vulnerability not just to death, but to interruption as within the context of life/death or world/earth, the inheritance of the spectral earth before the differentiation into world/earth. When Derrida searches for "these places that [living beings] inhabit in common," he does *not* argue they share a world in Heidegger's sense, but that they do share this place of inhabitation that is indescribable "as such," but is a place "as if" we shared a world. While humans and animals for Derrida do not share the world "as such," neither do we human beings have such a world. In the seminar, Derrida considers three hypotheses for how the world is shared amongst living beings: (1) "There is no world, only islands. That is one of the thousand directions in which I would be <tempted> to interpret the last line of a short and great poem by Celan: "*Die Welt ist fort, ich muss dich tragen.*" The world is far away, I must carry you."⁴⁸ (2) All living beings share a world; and (3) Human beings share a world amongst themselves, but not with other living beings.⁴⁹ The third (3) is Heidegger's view, whose sense of world Derrida tries to respond to. The first (1) and second (2) are two views of world that Derrida combines in a kind of undecidability in response to Heidegger's world. In dealing with the shared place living beings inhabit, Derrida outlines his concern as follows:

Of course, one can always question the supposed unity or identity of the world, not only between animal and human, but already from one living being to another. No one will ever be able to demonstrate, what is called demonstrate in all rigor, that two human

beings, you and I for example, inhabit the same world, that the world is one and the same thing for both of us.⁵⁰

World hypothesis (1), that each world is only an island, refers to the auto-affective thought of the repetition of a living being in its own lifeworld. But throughout the seminar, Derrida ends up pointing out the ways that even Robinson Crusoe, the most famous example of a single human being on an island, has a world open to others and a greater environment, a greater context of earth that can always disrupt one's stability of self as an island. But that does not mean we can quickly jump to (2), that there exists a world shared between all living beings. We have already been building this thought of a shared world as that which would be that inheritance of a context and inhabitation within it which never appears "as such" in each of our island worlds, but as a wider context can be inferred by the trace of all those interruptions, unexpected differentiations in our world, such that it seems "as if" we shared a world.

Before we go further, however, Derrida gives his position on Heidegger's *physis*, the third (3) world hypothesis above and how it differs from the earth he is developing:

Remember that for Heidegger – because we will need to think seriously about this – *physis* is not yet objective nature but the whole of the originary world in its appearing and in its originary growing. It is toward this originary 'world,' this *physis* older than the objective nature of the natural sciences or of post-cartesian metaphysics that we must turn our thought [...].⁵¹

For Heidegger, we have seen that the earth only presents itself in its strife with the world as what retreats from human gathering in a self-secluding myriad of unanalyzable forms, it is precisely those forms which resist any scientific ability to claim them.

Precisely what prevails as all-powerful for immediate experience claims the name *physis* for itself. Yet such is the vault of the heavens, the stars, the ocean, the earth, that which constantly threatens man, yet at the same time protects him too, that which supports, sustains and nourishes him; that which, in thus threatening and sustaining him, prevails of its own accord without the assistance of man.⁵²

Derrida counters that our encounter with *physis*, with the earth, is not ‘only’ something that sustains and threatens us, but is an anteriority that requires living worlds to perform its differentiation and thereby its ongoing transformation. Heidegger’s earth is both too human, as encountered only within the world as its self-secluding elements and does not do enough to acknowledge its deep anteriority before human differentiation, represented by *khôra*. The *khôra* represents Derrida’s attempt to give place to the earth before earth/world in that it is deeply inaccessible “as such” in the human world, the place all living beings inhabit in their shared vulnerability to death and disruption. The spectral earth before earth/world that we inherit, and which forms the context of our world that always might be differentiated differently forms the constant acknowledgement of our all-too-human world, with the earth designating precisely that aspect of the world’s context and inherence which interrupts it.

Near the middle of the seminar, there are many references to Robinson’s terror of the earth. “When the earthquake happens Robinson, terrorized by the earth [*terre*] itself, terrified by the earth and by the possible interring of his living life...”⁵³ and “which does not happen without the fear of being eaten, swallowed or buried alive by the vengeful anger of the elements, water or earth.”⁵⁴ Tying this to Heidegger’s *physis*, no matter the technical achievements and sovereign control over the island Robinson gains, he is still paranoid about the overwhelming power of the earth hanging over him, that force and power larger than himself and which envelops him on his

island. Throughout the seminar, Derrida uses his analyses of Heidegger and Robinson open an alternative thinking of *physis*. In Heidegger's way of thinking about *physis*, we can only be overwhelmed and grounded by a sovereign *physis*, always larger than us and without need of our assistance, to whom we are merely a latecomer even as the Dasein to which it presents itself. The alternative of *khôra* allows an engagement with the earth open to its resistance and passivity that emerges in its transforming forms through *différance*. Naas writes, "[s]ince there is no *autos*, no self, no *bios*, no life, and no *graphy*, no writing, before the world, autobiography begins always with a detour through the world and through the other, that is, with exappropriation and the intimations of death that come through every act of exappropriation."⁵⁵ In every movement of *différance*, there is an exappropriation, something given over to the other, to the earth, as what is not appropriated by the world – what is called here an intimation of death. This exappropriation is what might be said to be the gift given from one world to the earth to be picked up again by others, the expansion of the *reserve* side of the earth and the world of others. With exappropriation, we can better understand Derrida's earth that is shared as 'the same' finite context, but taken up in different ways. *Khôra* helps us to think this from the bottom up, from the lowest and most humble, differentiating itself in ways that might be different for each living being. As Krell writes "...The key for Derrida is to recognize the Earth's surface as a garden of infinite differences, and differentiations, a garden not spoiled by any single sovereign division, which always amounts to an us vs. them."⁵⁶ In particular, this is precisely not to say that *différance* 'uncovers' more and more of a shared earth, but that differentiation is the very method by which the earth and the world, grows through time. Growing through in an inclusion of the losses from rupture and newness of re-knotting.

By the end of the seminar, Derrida explains how he might reconcile those initial hypotheses on earth after a detour through his concerns with Heidegger and Robinson Crusoe. The first of these conclusions envisions a withdrawal where all beings are fundamentally islands, with no shared world, and would be our inability to share a world “as such.” We have seen how the repetition of ourselves in our world is not unlike living on an island. And yet, because of *différance* and the inheritance of the earth within the world we are never alone on this island, we always defer to an outside towards which we are deeply passive. But it is partially up to us how to react to these ruptures.

Or else, 2nd hypothesis, that where there is no world, where the world is not here or there, but *fort*, infinitely distant over there, that what I must do, with you and carrying you, is make it that there be precisely a world, just a world, if not a just world, or to do things so as to make as if there were just a world, and to make the world come to the world, to make as if – for you, to give it to you, to bear it toward you, destined for you; to address it to you – I made the world come into the world, as though there ought to be a world where precisely there is none, to make the gift or present of this as if come up poetically, [...].⁵⁷

To “make as if there were just a world” can now be more fully thought through the topography of world, earth, and *khôra* in their interplay. Our shared habitat of the spectral earth can only be constructed sense of world “as if” it were shared.

§3: Time

In this final section, we will finish laying out the full topography of *khôra*, earth, and world. To do so, we will have to better explain the role of time in *khôra* that explains the “spacing out” (*espacement*) of earth and world.⁵⁸ In *Advances*, Derrida examines *khôra*’s

relationship to time through which he connects *khôra* to “the human earth”.⁵⁹ Here, *khôra* is ready to receive all others, the to-come of *différance* that is also, retrospectively, the return of a past that was never itself present. This past nonetheless is what ‘returns,’ in what appears in the world, but never as exactly what it ‘was,’ as properly speaking it comes into Being first and foremost through the process of *différance*. The site of *khôra* exists in “a time of *inoperativity*,”⁶⁰ a passivity before even our encounter with sensibility in the world, a time before all philosophical, intelligible theories of time.⁶¹ All intelligible, philosophical times come after the necessity of “an incalculable expenditure, and irreversible loss of energy”⁶² that traces back to “... the nonchronological order, the a-chronical or anachronical dis-order of a time before every other time.”⁶³ Derrida interprets Plato’s Demiurge, a kind of artisan-god who sacrifices themselves for the world in their working through the *khôra*.

With a draftsman’s or sculptor’s skill, however, [the Demiurge] inscribes, he imprints directly upon the “site.” Directly there on a support that is in no way substantial, in the impassive receptacle called *khôra*, he engraves, as if by hand, images or copies.⁶⁴

Both an inaccessible earthly humus and the promise to receive its transformation and imprint into a world through the process of *différance*. With humanity entering into the picture, we gain a responsibility to continue this openness to *différance* and to prevent its destruction. This incalculable expenditure is called the Demiurge’s promise, in performing its strange task of imprinting on the *khôra*, the living/dying of the earth in both its repetition and its heterological aspect in every repetition in *différance*.

Neither living nor dead: *ci-devant*, surviving, but surviving as dying. Dying [*La mourance*] and survival [*survivance*] belong to one another because the being-toward-death of the Demiurge, in its temporality of incessant imminence, is inseparable from a

promise. [...] The Demiurge would be, from the beginning, a sort of survivor, thus a dying being who writes the world in the instance of his death, his own or the world's. He haunts a memory, but the memory of a promise.⁶⁵

The promise of the Demiurge is thus the unkeepable promise to responsibly and fully take up the earth as inherited by us human beings. Thus, this promise is a repetition, an attempt by us at the responsibility when navigating our world to listen for and bear up others as they appear in this context, in their spectrally 'presenting themselves,' both as fully present to us and yet also as still remaining every bit other. The promise of the earth brings the responsibility towards this spectral form of otherness that may occur in every repetition of the world from the margins of its environment. And, when this does happen, that what is new in the world will be recognized as 'having-always-been-there' in some way as an inherited part of the earth, although not in a previously recognized way. The earth is thereby tied to *khôra* as the promise of the demiurge to continue this task of repetition with opening to *différance*, the promise of the world to-come which would fully embrace this earth, but which is an unkeepable promise, as the world must always undergo *différance* in order to repeat itself, expanding the very thing it meant to repeat as exactly the same.

[The promise] is not in the world, for the world "is" (promised) within the promise, according to the promise. Not a promise from the human to God or from God to the human, nor of the human (as a being in the world) to itself, but a finite promise of the world, as world: it is up to "us" to make the world survive; [...] it is thus up to "us" to make what "we" inadequately call the human earth survive, an earth that "we" know is finite, that it can and must exhaust itself in an end.⁶⁶

The inheritance of the promise of the earth, the earth before earth/world, continues or may not continue, just as evolution or a language used by a community of speakers continues. These things continue only in their living-on, which includes the death of their old way of being at the same time a new way is being birthed. We are vital part of that continuation as forming some sense of world in the world/earth dynamic – for while animals and perhaps other living beings might also have their own island worlds, they cannot be held responsible for its continuation or destruction, as we can. When any living being dies, its singularity of world shared “as such” with no one, not even themselves, ends its unique and signature tapestry, its own unique and irreplaceable propagation of *différance*. And yet something after its death is passed on, in countless ways, through the spectral earth before earth/world: an earth to be picked up by others in their own undergoing of *différance* as the context of their worlds, within *khôra* as the receptacle that receives the spacing out of them all. Herein lies the promise of a future beyond our death, the survival of this trace of our existence in the world of others and future beings. Not as our world, which has properly speaking died, fully ended, been fully and utterly extinguished as what it was in its singularity. But in the place of what all beings share “as if” they shared a world, a constructed place that survives in the world of others in their own taking up of it. Each supposed world as an island now must be understood always within this inherited context of others, who in their otherness, might always transform the world and the earth. This earth, anterior to Heidegger’s earth/world, must defer through others in an openness to an unanticipated, non-teleological alterity. Not a world, not Being, but as a gift that is not the whole signature of each being that each living being inherits from one another. The expanse of these inheritances, combined with a vulnerability to further change through *différance*, the spacing out

of the earth before earth/world in this field of expanding differences, losses, and gains without essential qualities of its own except to receive all this in its site, is *khôra*.

We now have our topography of the world, earth, and *khôra* laid out in full. For the final part of this paper, we will place it within a context of other recent interpretations of Derrida's earth, world, and *khôra*. First of these interpretations, Wood worries that

[Derrida] is perhaps less comfortable thinking the earth as a whole even as a complex system of differences with all the dangers of totalization that that entails. [...] I am left then with the question of whether deconstruction is of any direct help in adumbrating a kind of (quasi)transcendental materialism, a materialism that would ground what matters as its condition of possibility, even as it occupies the same one surface on the Mobius strip.⁶⁷

The thought of "the earth as a whole" and a "(quasi)transcendental materialism" reaches the heart of a difficulty I have been faced when trying to connect Derrida's *khôra* and earth, showing how *khôra* and the earth before earth/world are close to one another yet remain distinct. Derrida's earth can be of help in understanding a (quasi-)transcendental materialism, as that earth before earth/world, but a strange one which is always ready to swing open like a trapdoor under our feet when we try to totalize any of the ways it presents itself to us. In our every attempt to defer through our entire context, we can only become more greatly aware that we share the earth with this growing inheritance of others whom we cannot gather, master, or be sovereign over. Under this interpretation, the Derridian view of 'materialism' is that it remains an unmasterable totalization in its further spacing-out in every re-iteration of *différance*.

This interpretation runs close to what Fritsch writes of the context of the earth before earth/world, "the claim here is that the context is inexhaustible, not because the list would be too

long to itemize, but rather for the more essential reason that the context is itself undergoing change as it constitutes the elements of which it is made up.”⁶⁸ That is to say, the earth forms the context of others the world attempts to totalize, but fails, precisely due to this inexhaustibility which describes the flow of the world and the earth into the future as continuously open to growing more complex and never finishing, although also holding the possibility of complete destruction and the end to differentiation, or at least the loss of much of its complex results so far (such as all life on earth). Even if we could, for example, totalize every possible variation on carbon- and DNA-based life on earth, who is to say that is the only kind of life possible? Or the only kind of differentiation? In *Taking Turns with the Earth*, he argues that the very context of our being in the world is being alongside other finite beings in such a way that their otherness forms the irreducible heterogeneous aspect of experience. The earth, as the history and habitat of life, is one name for the “hetero” “in the auto-hetero-affection that defines life.”⁶⁹ My interpretation pushes further to pull apart the earth as the ever-changing inheritance of this history in the spectral earth before earth/world, and *khôra* as its habitat and site which is ready to receive whatever changes occur through the “hetero-” of the auto-hetero-affection. This heteronomy in the earth is promised to the world in the repetition every mark of its expansion through *différance*, this interruptive expansion continuously received by the *khôra*, “only receiving instead of everything.”⁷⁰ The earth and world thereby expand into what the *khôra* receives, with the “promise of the earth” or the earth-to-come being the retrospective truth of the earth in the world borne up by this process.

The timespace of *différance* is the reason Derrida speaks of life as *sur-vivance*—“survival” or “living-on”: life lives only by overcoming death at each turn. Identity must of necessity be repeated, for an identity is never given once and for all.⁷¹

Khôra is a cipher for “the timespace of *différance*” mentioned here, and that which is “living-on” of identity within it the transforming spectrality of the earth before earth/world.

Touching close to the thoughts of a possible materialism and of the auto-hetero-affection above, Lynes writes of

an arche-material res(is)tance, older than the distinction between Being and beings [...] which would in turn instil the hetero-affection of a material *restance* at the heart of its auto-affective temporalization, a res(is)tance that resists the ontological ‘is’ at its heart, places Being under erasure, resisting all objectification, all the while making it possible.⁷²

This “arche-material res(is)tance” that resists the ‘is’ of Being refers to the rupture within Being, an ‘is’ that ‘is’ only as it appears in the ‘looking back’ at how things have transformed in the contextual network of *différance* – it is one way to ‘name’ the resistance in the world, the otherness and passivity which is the ‘shared material’ worked on. Later, Lynes references the *khôra* explicitly in the two ways to think about the kind of mastery the arche-material res(is)tance has over our world, asking

whether it is a hypersovereignty that tends in the direction of a Good beyond Being, a sovereignty so sovereign that it exceeds all the determinations of what is called sovereignty, or a sovereignty that, perhaps like *Khôra*, relinquishes all sovereign power, a retreat or withdrawal from sovereignty that gives place to but does not itself exercise sovereign violence.⁷³

That is, he leaves us to wonder whether *khôra* helps us to think about this res(is)tance as a deep retreat from any kind of mastery of the world. And yet, *khôra* gives us a ‘name’ for how we will not be able to totalize the world, for the world’s continuing res(is)tance over time. I find myself in general agreement with Fritsch and Lynes, but hope my topography brings further

clarity to Derrida's *khôra* as the site for the earth before earth/world's expansion as integrated with the fundamental disruption and transformation this topography adds to their analyses.

Next, I am more critical of Toadvine's focus on stone in the earth, as what would be left of the world after an apocalypse. Namely, that one of the deepest encounters with the other as earth and nature, as the farthest tracing back of to the origin of *différance*, is the elementality and memory of stone. While such a thought of elementality and memory within the world is possible, it may obscure or overshadow Derrida's deepest and most radical anteriority of the earth before earth/world as situated within *khôra*. The focus on stone is one of the most ancient forms of memory that can be taken up in the process of *différance*, the deepest form of passivity we are likely to encounter. Stone could form a 'touchstone' in being the least affected, the furthest trace back of *différance*, before language and evolution, before the earliest forms of life.

This brings us to the relationship between the world, its formation or destruction, and the elements. Just as every stone is outside the relation of life and death, stone remains liminal to the world that it nevertheless makes possible in quasitranscendental fashion. This discloses the world's ongoing liability to elemental materiality and memory, especially the memory of earth and stone.⁷⁴

What might be said about stone is that it would be the last to go – but go it must, and it cannot take the place of *khôra*, nor can it take the place of the earth before earth/world as it transforms. Where I agree more is when Toadvine comes closer in what might be called an elemental or indestructible 'end' to the trace of *différance* in terms of a "there is":

[t]he stone extracted from the elements to become part of the world remains nevertheless inhabited or haunted by this anonymous elementality from which the world is extracted and to which it must inevitably return. This is why our imaginations of the

world's end run up against a limit that is, finally, indestructible: the fact that "there is" something, [...].⁷⁵

If the earth plays a role alongside the *khôra*, as its most pure form of the 'there is' of the elemental, then Toadvine's conclusion seems correct. But even here we must also understand this limit: that we cannot say anything concrete about what the fundamental 'there is,' is.

Llewelyn's thought hedges closest to a direct relationship between *khôra* and earth, but still only loosely connects the two.

[Derrida] expects to discover that the economy of the homely internality of the *chez soi* [at home] of the economy of the *oikos* is set aquaking by the visitation of some external, diseconomic, unsaving, sublime, *unheimlich* [uncanny], *ungeheuer* [unusual, extraordinary, monstrous] unthing of which it can be said in the sinister left-handed script of *chora* that it exists, but, partitatively, that *il y en a*: there is some of it about, as one says of influenza, whose name may go some way to explaining why the notion of influence causes Derrida dis-ease.⁷⁶

For Llewelyn, *khôra* is 'what is about' in our not-being-at-home in Being. I have not here focused on this "monstrous" and "sinister" side of *khôra*, although *khôra* can receive this side of things too. While *khôra* opens us up to new possibilities, some good, like the mutations of evolution, they are often bad or unhelpful. Moreover, their continuous persistence comes in the form of a rupture or interruption that disturbs any feeling of at-home-ness. This is almost the opposite of the safety of stone from the apocalypse. The safety of stone after environmental disaster leaves a solidity in what is inherited again by any new forms of life. But *khôra*, more anterior than stone, is without any memory of its own, ready to be inherited. It remains impassive and ready to receive, even before the beginning of time, as the site ready to receive all the

twisting transformations of the earth before earth/world, with no particular substance, not even stone, that could definitely be said to originate this process. Llewelyn's *khôra* highlights how the function of *différance* promises an earth that cannot be promised in any of its particulars, only as a "there is," which undergoes *différance*.

It is, finally, Colebrook's contributions to *Eco-Deconstruction* that rounds out a way to think the earth from our finite perspective. "Literally, the earth remains present; but the conditions that allow us to think this presence – conditions of inscription or literal conditions the brute materiality through which ideality is made possible – are erased when any factual mind ceases to live." And "The radicalism and force of deconstruction lie in the opening of any putative closure: any actuality must – by virtue of the forces that bring it into being – have the possibility of being otherwise. No concept can ever be articulated fully; no event can be exhausted without promising or being haunted by an unforeseeable futurity."⁷⁷ In Colebrook's view, Derrida sees the forces that bring actuality into Being as living minds. But I have argued that *différance* goes back further, existing in processes of evolution and life that might not be considered living minds. The anterior earth 'exists' only in a highly qualified way – as the spectral – but all determinate claims and experience of it come only after the differentiation by a living mind into world and earth, and thus nothing direct can be said of it. These material sites of its inscription, the earth and stone 'before' us, are all only gathered into the presentation of Being after differentiation into earth, stone, and so forth, generally recognized as sites of inscription by the living.

Establishing Derrida's topography of world, earth, and *khôra* has let us think an alternative to Heidegger's earth. Unlike Heidegger's earth as self-seclusion of *physis*, for Derrida, what is supposed to be most familiar as the 'jutting out' of the earth in the world can

also be source of unexpected interruption. This interruption is followed through in its trace to a more anterior and withdrawn sense of the earth than *physis*, *khôra* as the site of *différance*. The world leaves its traces on ours, even when we cannot come to understand them “as such.” We always come towards the earth through our constructions in the “setting up” of a world. It is through this island world of ours, its being interrupted and differentiated, that we tap into all these others, each with their own finitude, not even themselves being a total and complete world. We cannot think the entire history of the traces of things, but we can ‘name’ its site and process, and what this names would contain both the thought of the earth and *khôra*. We are thus left in the undecidability between our individual worlds, a world shared with other human beings, and a world shared with all others (a presumed habitat for all living things in their birth and death, a world, earth or general place that came before us all and supported all our coming into being). The earth in any of its interpretations remains for him the other side of the world, which always continues to disrupt the human claim to sovereignty. What is concealed within it is the context of others which constantly opens the world to change, to its own differentiation and transformation, and this process requires an aspect of within the world that is always held back while not being an origin or structured world itself.

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¹ Matthias Fritsch, Phillippe Lynes, and David Wood, *Eco-deconstruction: Derrida and Environmental Philosophy*, (New York, Fordham University Press, 2018); Matthias Fritsch, *Taking Turns with the Earth: Phenomenology, Deconstruction, and Intergenerational Justice*, (Stanford, CA; Stanford University, 2018); Phillippe Lynes, *Futures of Life Death on Earth: Derrida's General Ecology*, (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018); David Wood, "Specters of Derrida: On the Way to Econstruction" in *Ecospirit*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 264-88; Ted Toadvine, "The End of All Things: Geomateriality and Deep Time," (*Investigaciones Fenomenológicas* 7, 2018), 367-390. Francesco Vitale, "The Text and the Living, Jacques Derrida between Biology and Deconstruction," (*Oxford Literary Review* 36:1, 2014), 95-114.

² Derrida, "Khôra," in *On The Name*, 89.

³ For examples of Derrida's world, see Michael Naas, *The End of the World and Other Teachable Moments: Jacques Derrida's Final Seminar*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015); for earth, Lynes, *Futures of Life Death on Earth* and Fritsch, *Taking Turns with the Earth*; for *khôra*, Llewelyn's "Writing Home: Eco-Choro-Spectrography," in *Eco-Deconstruction* and Emmanuel Falque, "Khôra or 'The Great Bifurcation' Discussion with Derrida" in *Louvain Studies* 39, 4 (2015–2016), 337-363.

⁴ Jacques Derrida, "Istrice 2. Ick bünn all hier" in *Points...* trans. Peggy Kamuf and others, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995 [1993]), 325.

⁵ See for example Chapter 1 of Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, (New York, Routledge Classics, 2006 [1993]), 57.

⁶ See Jacques Derrida, "The Difference" essay in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass, (Brighton, Harvester Press, 1982 [1972]), 21.

⁷ Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art” in *Basic Writings: Martin Heidegger*, trans. and edited by David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 2011), 139-212. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2012).

⁸ John Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1997), 75.

⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Malden: Blackwell, 2013), 36.

¹⁰ E.g., Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 33.

¹¹ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 172-173.

¹² Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 173.

¹³ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 168.

¹⁴ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 174.

¹⁵ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 170.

¹⁶ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 171-172.

¹⁷ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 159.

¹⁸ Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 198.

¹⁹ Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 197-198.

²⁰ Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 198.

²¹ Derrida, *Marges: De la philosophie* (Paris, Minuit, 1972) trans. Alan Bass as *Margins of Philosophy* (Brighton, Harvester Press, 1982) 6 [8].

²² Francesco Vitale. “The Text and the Living, Jacques Derrida between Biology and Deconstruction.” *Oxford Literary Review*, Volume 36 Issue 1, 101.

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- ²⁴ Marian Hobson, *Jacques Derrida: Opening Lines*. (London: Routledge, 1998), 199.
- ²⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak as (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974 [1967]), 93.
- ²⁶ Derrida, "*Khôra*," 89.
- ²⁷ Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell*, 96-97.
- ²⁸ Derrida, "*Khôra*," 94.
- ²⁹ Derrida, "*Khôra*," 113.
- ³⁰ Derrida, "*Khôra*," 94.
- ³¹ Derrida, "*Khôra*," 116.
- ³² Jacques Derrida, "*Che cos'è la poesia ?*" in *Points de suspension: Entretiens* (Paris, Galilée, 1992); trans. Peggy Kamuf and others as *Points... Interviews, 1974-1994* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995), 297.
- ³³ Derrida, "*Che cos'è la poesia ?*" in *Points... Interviews, 1974-1994*, 297.
- ³⁴ Derrida, "*Istrice 2. Ick bunn all hier*" in *Points... Interviews, 1974-1994*, 325.
- ³⁵ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 2.
- ³⁶ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 6.
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- ³⁸ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 18.
- ³⁹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 32.
- ⁴⁰ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 46.
- ⁴¹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 116.
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- ⁴³ Derrida, *Donner la mort* (Paris, Galilée, 1999); trans. David Wills as *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret: Second Edition* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2008), 82.
- ⁴⁴ Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, 47.
- ⁴⁵ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 185.
- ⁴⁶ Jacques Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 10.
- ⁴⁷ Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 177.
- ⁴⁸ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 9.
- ⁴⁹ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 9.
- ⁵⁰ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 265-266.
- ⁵¹ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 12.
- ⁵² Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 30.
- ⁵³ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 79.
- ⁵⁴ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 85.
- ⁵⁵ Michael Naas, *The End of the World and Other Teachable Moments: Jacques Derrida's Final Seminar*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 101.
- ⁵⁶ David Farrell Krell, *Derrida and Our Animal Others. Derrida's Final Seminar, the Beast and the Sovereign*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 101.
- ⁵⁷ Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign Volume II*, 268.
- ⁵⁸ Derrida, "Khôra," 90.
- ⁵⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Avances*, preface to Serge Margel, *Le Tombeau du dieu artisan* (Paris, Minuit, 1995); trans. Phillippe Lynes as *Advances* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 13.

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- ⁶⁶ Derrida, *Advances*, 47.
- ⁶⁷ Wood, *Eco-Deconstruction*, 46.
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- ⁷² Lynes, *Eco-Deconstruction*, 107.
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- ⁷⁴ Toadvine, *Eco-Deconstruction*, 55.
- ⁷⁵ Toadvine, *Eco-Deconstruction*, 74.
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