

METAPHORICS OF SEEING
(The figural and visible in Descartes' text)

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The drama is first of all textual
--Jacques Derrida

In lieu of a 'preface?'

The textual drama to be circumscribed is elicited here by a philosophical circumlocution whereby the figural and visible are gathered from their dispersion in the text of Descartes to offer a reading of the same. But in arriving at this 'sameness' one charts portions of the Cartesian epistemology through projections of the figural and the visible and works these in their various determinations. Metaphor and seeing¹ mark the passage of Descartes' philosophy into its status as a 'work'. The '*Tree of Philosophy*' offers a point of departure for such an undertaking where besides visibility, invisibility and representation-- the life of the concept (begriffe) can be mapped. Or, to follow Descartes 'The whole of philosophy' can be visualied in its tangentialities which offer a trace of the 'Real'.

Ergo

Walter Benjamin remarks in '*Illuminations*' that memory is possible, only within a tradition. And if a desire to remember Descartes is to arrive at its realization, textuality must effect an 'investiture' (investment) of the French tradition, for which Descartes is a pivotal figure. The French tradition which situates itself on the schizophrenic horizon of Cartesian thought has emulated a split, which renders us an easy taxonomy; on the one hand a philosophy of consciousness and on the other a philosophy of the concept. Philosophy of consciousness has within its tabulary extensions the domain of subjectivity as its primary concern following Sartre and Merleau--Ponty and the philosophy of the concept revels in a critique of the subject and a valorization of the "transcendental fields (without a subject)" (Hippolyte) and the "concretion of Reason-Science" (Bachelard). Canguilhem, Cavailles, and more recently Foucault

aa epistemologists and historians of science avail of these notional fields under the rubric of the philosophy of the concept. Yet the history of philosophy educates us of the exchange-mechanism 'ushered' by philosophy of clude such a taxonomy in its crude actuality.

The question of a reading, here, of Descartes can be prefaced on a Foucauldian note; where textuality demands 'From where does this discourse draw its legitimacy?' or to shed the suggestion of that much maligned notion of 'origin'— 'How can Thought think itself? We read Descartes like Husserl's Descartes in the 'Idea of Phenomenology' who has undergone "suitable alterations".

Anglophone Descartes scholarship remains stratified in traditional but doubtlessly excellent terms². How are we on the fringes to read into a confluence of traditions? We are faced with on option but to play the double game, serving the tyrannical text and its rules but yet procuring for ourselves a reading that dislocates the rule-series of the 'Master-text'. A laborious exercise which "leaves us no other recourse than to strategem and strategy" (Derrida).

Why metaphors and What seeing?

The figural and the visible form the cornerstone of early Baroque thought, primarily because the epistemological and the desiring circuits are received where the signifying system of 'Nature' is being endowed with a dual-face.

One, where God is manifest through 'second causes' and the other is the deprecated state opposed to the 'Grace' of Scholastic Theology.

Desire, in its corporeal conjunctions is purged into a dark libidinal field of metaphor, theory and the split zone of a paradoxical practice. (A practice whose scientific imagination is haunted by Witchcraft and Alchemy). So for Nicole the "object of geometry is not linked in any way to concupiscence" (Sexual desire). Where on the one hand desire is displaced, artifice is located performing vital functions in Jansenist morals, "but I must hold that one must be satisfied with expressing compassion without actually feeling it" (La Rouchefoucauld). Perhaps the 17th Century can indeed be read as a double faced age where Baconian experimentalism and Hermetic Philosophy generate what T. S. Eliot calls a 'Unified Sensibility' arising from the merger of Scholasticism and Renaissance curiosity.

The 'Relegio Medici' of Thomas Browne (1636) offers an exemplary reading :

"The World that I regard is my self; it is the Microcosm of my own frame that I cast my Eyes on;"³

The subject is centralized and conceptualized as visible, and set into motion to delve into the 'Macrocosm' 'for recreation'. Amidst the assumption of the settled and determined order of the World, Browne considers "a great part of philosophy to have been witchcraft". Philosophy is bound up with invention and artifice and Magic is the teaching of the Evil Genius. Both, unfolding under the sign of Nature, Nature as scripture "from where I collect my divinity" or as "servant of God" or again that universal and publick Manuscript that lies, expans'd unto the Eyes of all".

The dialectic of the edifice and foundation is replayed through the history of philosophy from *Descartes' Tree*, to Kant and Nietzsche's architectural metaphors to the texts of Marxism. Faith and Reason as foundation and edifice respectively are elaborated in the Theatre of divinity and the Devil.

Nature (as the field of the metaphoric of seeing) becomes the site for dogma, philosophy, profane and sacred love and the embryonic science to engage their inherent tensions and contentions which take figural and visible forms for their constructs and their fears.⁴

Textuality's *point de depart* for this reading is the dual-type metaphoric X symbolic. What is to be traced are its limited region which fall within the purview of an *ars combinatoria* (the 'combinatory' with Leibnitz) and the '*analysis situ*' of the structuralists. This will be elaborated in the concretized methodological excursus into Leibnitz's text.

But then first as our 'chora' (place, site) indicates *metaphoricity*.
Metaphorein = Übertragung = Transference.

Aristotle locates metaphor in a transport of a term from one site to another. Against this rendering of metaphor as a rhetorical figure Vico alludes to it as a 'short fable'. To our concern both the figural and the fabulatory descriptions bear a germane testimony.

A genealogy or a history of origins in Nietzsche's sense will lead us to locate the 'Tree Metaphor' as an opening to the metaphoric

conjunction of the cartesian terrain which has its historical ancestry in the Stoic metaphor for philosophy and its progeny in Marx's and Heidegger's reading of the Cartesian Tree.

Warp of Signs and the Woof of Representations :

Cogitate Descartes :

"Thus philosophy as a whole is like a tree whose roots are metaphysics, whose trunk is physics, and whose branches, which issue from this trunk, are all the other sciences. These reduce themselves to three principal ones, viz medicine, mechanics and morals— I mean the highest and most perfect moral science which, presupposing a complete knowledge of the other sciences, is the last degree of Wisdom"⁵

The strategy which operates in a reading of the 'Tree' is of locating what can be called an 'afterword—effect' which lies in the particularities of the metaphoric register of the Cartesian text. Afterword is the site or non-site or pure construction where the 'germs of the problematic are detected'. The effectivity is in its textual derivations brought home as an analytic to our concerns.

In this fabulatory rendering Descartes endows nature with a 'viva voce' (living voice)⁶ which situates nature into a signifying routine. The central signifying unit here is the representational 'like' (with its over-extended connotations) is led to an abstracted and generalized state where it "simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases".

The essential conceptual concern of Descartes is suddenly rendered into a renewed zone of problematics where a "nerve-stimulus passes into an image which leads into sound which leads into the concept" which we read with Nietzsche is "the residue of a metaphor". A study of the metaphoric fields in the cartesian text draws to commit a paraphrase of the early Deleuze; where we move to construct within the counter-history of philosophy an attempt to "apply the test of true and false to *problems* themselves" which here is metaphor. Or precisely the 'Tree' is the metaphoric charged sign of philosophy. "It is by showing how we move from one meaning to another and what the *fundamental meaning* is, that we are able to answer the general methodological question" which can be understood in the rediscovery of intuition as the 'lived act' of Cartesian epistemology.

When textuality approaches the 'Tree' we find Descartes encapsulated

within what Lacan describes as “a discourse in the universal moment of which he finds himself at his birth”. Which for Descartes is order, enumeration and the inherited geometry of Pappus. The ‘Tree’ definitely attempts the creation of meaning and yet the ‘signifying-effect’ leads us to what Lacan has deemed the S/s (S barred) formula situation “which is read as : the signifier (word) over the signified (concept) ‘over’ corresponding to the line separating the 2 levels.”⁷ One, of the synchronic structure which is individually articulate in the “being different from others” and the other, of the “diachronic set of completely pronounced discourses” which “reacts historically” on the former. These two “distinct orders” of signification are separated initially by a barrier resisting signification.

And within our ‘Tree’ this barrier seems to be the exteriorized ‘Method’ which through its apparent silence produces an “unexpected precipitation of meaning” elsewhere by an occultation of signifiers. The signified aspires to a systematic relation, where the signifier “answers to the function of representing the signified”. Yet the failure of such an exercise renders it illusionary. The space of the historical reaction of the signifieds on the procession of signifier unsettles the whole process. As the structure of “the first governs the pathways of the second” the relation of predominance of the over, the barred, surfaces. A signifying reduction leads to the blank of utility which is overinscribed with its numerous connotations of reduction and instrumentality.

Consider Galileo in ‘Il Saggiatore’ :

“Philosophy is written in the book of the universe but it cannot be read until we have learnt the language and the characters in which it is written. It is written in mathematical language and its signs lie in angles, circles and other geometrical figures without which it is impossible to understand a single word”.⁸

Another conceptual orientation which derives its discursivity from the metaphorics of reading and inscription, here the “Transcendental Signified” (Derrida)— Philosophy is reduced in the play of signifiers and the language of figures to a possibility which is realized if and only if the moment of consummate signification arrives (but this is a separate problem). A totalizing cut-up operates which oscillates between comprehension and absolute non-comprehension. Here it would be useful to consider Saussure’s notion of “glissement” or sliding between levels

as one is faced with this sliding between the text of Method and philosophical discourse and sliding back again. Making the distinction between the Tree and its exterior a futile one; as one is bound up in the signification of the other.

Within this metaphoric Descartes accepts his inheritance of metaphoricality and the mechanistic-mathematical model and opts for comprehension. "The memory of old signs" draws Descartes into a comprehending 'geste' (gesture) within which he anticipates the critical transitions of the radical of Königsberg wherein the extension of Pure Reason becomes a simultaneous contraction or as Falckenberg asserts for Hegel that ethics is the domain of 'real' spirit. Descartes traverses this course by accepting morals as the highest and most perfect of all sciences and as that "which presupposes all other sciences" leads one to wonder whether we are witnessing German Idealism's transition from 'Wissenschaft' (science) to 'Weisheit' (wisdom) of Practical Reason? Does this effect a 'depassment' or more popularly *aufhebung* (sublation) of discursivity in the Question of the Nature of the Real? and of the 'reality' which is possessed by means of 'the clear and the distinct? This notation proposes an immediacy as the criterion for the epistemological real (the distinct as elaborated in Descartes is the "intuition of the eye") or the conditionality of that which can be known and thus all that can be known is known as clear (Recalling Galileo's absolute oscillation) or not known at all.

The Lacanian interface teaches us how "the whole of philosophy" is a conceptual-orientation seeking to become a concept. It is drawn into a mirror-play with the whole of method and the whole of its figural self and lapses into the momentary signifying silence of recognition. The vagaries of signifiers elude their mechanistic arbitrary determination which seek to constrain them in *particularized references* thereby dislodging the Real from its site.⁹

Ars Combinatoria Via Analytica

Within the metaphoric-field, the primary concepts, by which the rest are formed are either distinct or confused. Leibnitz's taxonomy reduces the field to the ontological distinctness of 'being' or the confusion associated with concepts like 'coloured'. The essential criterion of clarity is induced by an enumeration of essential signs which marks the "nominal definitions" which in turn leads to the "primitive concepts". From the

combination of which arise the "derivative concepts".

How does the Tree revolve around this "science of quality" in general? It does so by finding itself in the *combinations* of the distributions of the "like and unlike". Within these distributions one gathers the 'Tree' in its entirety to be an application, a *combinatory*. Where we move from the sign to the end. Within Descartes this is the pre-figured teleology of the 'fruits'.

But then how are we to follow the later Sartre who aligns Descartes to "the totalitarian development of *analytical reason*" which "clarifies the historical (hence the particular) meaning of the new rationality"? When (in the S/s) the signifiers escape the tutelage of the signifieds within the 'Tree Sign' are we left with the combination once again of 'floating signifiers'? Another synthetic elision of the Cartesian analytic? What of the classical philosophical thematics of the 'ground' of the 'Tree'? The 'soil' from which Descartes Tree grows remains to be seen. The 'terra firma' yet 'terra incognita'!

The roots of Descartes Tree are extended in a ground which is to use Lacan's term 'disguised' and is the zone of the 'analytic'; the hidden means whereby we travel from "the given end" to the sign which constitutes this end.

But what then is this 'end'; the significations of which are understood by us as the analytic? in keeping with cartesian foundationalism, the 'founding intuition' of subjectivity projects itself here.¹⁰

Here the mapping of the subject takes place in relation to the sign in which he is 'barred' or in which he is reduced as the signifiers escape the conceptual field which would embellish him with finite substantiality. In the 'Tree' the subject lies hidden but rooted and in this the striving for certainty is situated. Does this buried 'subjectivity' have the epistemological clarity later ascribed to the 'Cogito' which becomes a determining instance in Western reason? Is the desired self-reflective 'clarity' and transparency available? However to proceed one must understand that in these 'depths' an epistemological value has a metaphoric value and the inverse is valid as well.

Sartre unleashes the intentionalities of phenomenology on this tropic-Space we have deemed as the hidden subjectivity in a way distinct

from or rather preceding the cartesian 'cogito'. Sartre's "pre-reflective cogito" is a misreading of the subject-trope available to the Descartes of the Meditations. It is a pre-figured and pre-supposed internalized subjectivity which is forced to appear as the 'cogito' when it faces the blank of doubt.

The Cartesian cogito realizes in its interiority a metaphoricity of seeing subjectivity and on the other hand an exteriority constructed in the "identity of appearance and existence" or the "total emptiness" which follows the exteriorization of the World. (Sartre)

The Cogito, the essence of the ground of Descartes Tree in its particularity is a two-fold representation : first as image, then as image of this image. The life then of "this figure is the incessant procreation of this double representation". Within this becoming, the representative nature of the Cogito shows itself. We are in a way revealed our hermeneutic space. *The space of becoming and representation.*

Detour : Kant and Derrida

(The return of the same in another site)

The problems typified around Descartes' Tree can be elaborated with Kant in the Critique of Judgement by the notion of 'Hypotyposes'. Kant distinguishes Hypotyposes from a mere 'mark' or a 'sign' as it offers an intrinsic connexion with the intuition of the Object. Schematic and Symbolic are the taxonomical heads under which hypotyposes operates. Symbolic hypotyposes is elucidated as the indirect presentation of the concept. The problem surfaces with the dual separation in Kant's text; firstly the separation of signs (which conform to the law of the imagination : Subjectivity) and hypotyposes. Kant's second separation is between Schematic and Symbolic hypotyposes. Which is just as important to him as the demarcation of discursive knowledge from intuitive knowledge. The Critique of Judgement claims that the Symbolic or analogical hypotyposes works in a double function, the second of which consists in transferring the rules of reflection (*Übertragung der Reflexion*). The example in Kant is that of the Symbolic hypotyposes where the "monarchical state" is represented as a "living body" and a "despotic state" is represented as a "mere machine". The 'Tree of Philosophy' also unfolds as an analogical hypotyposes whereby 'the rules of reflection' of an order of a *natural combinatory continuity* are transferred to its reception in

the Theoretical order operating under separate signs. One is not to restrain the interrogation of the Figure with a desire to arrive at the proper schema of the concept, but to question the separation of "Symbolic" and "Schematic" itself thereby locating the literality of the concept in the signifying process of philosophy. Within what Derrida calls "a general tropology" we trace this transference at its multiple sites of "analogy" or "indirectness" and the corresponding "rational concept" (following Kant) which could be Philosophy itself. If textuality with deconstruction questions the "undoubtedly philosophical and certainly Platonic ideal, an ideal that is produced in the separation (and order) between philosophy or dialectics on the one hand and (Sophistic) rhetoric on the other, the separation demanded by Plato himself" and if we are to restrict this transference to a rational meaning series we will have to "describe a philosophical rhetoric in the service of an autonomous theory" which constitutes itself in the determining moment of the suspended memory of the interiority and temporality of its own language. But the fate of this transference (*Übertragung*) lies in a 'condensation' (*verdichtung*) which it suffers for its trajectorial autonomy when faced "with an entire metaphoricity, an entire tropic system with its own configurations within the conjoined history of metaphor and philosophy. It gathers itself into the interiorities of these histories with "the superimposition of signifiers" (Lacan). We need the metaphoricity of the 'Tree' as a conjectural sub-text in order to make the literal text of the Tree speak. Yet the Tree has no readable structure but of these metaphoricities.

The Heidegger Connexion

"Sticking to this image, we ask : In what soil do the roots of the tree of philosophy have their hold?" Heidegger pursues this mode of questioning to uncover the ontological foundations of metaphysics; where "the representations of metaphysics" are "seen" in "the light of Being". The trajectory of our questioning leads not to the representations of metaphysics in its particularity but with the 'sign' of the "whole of philosophy" (which leads as mentioned before to the pre-figured teleology of the 'fruits') Heidegger can re-enter the metaphoricity within the 'ground' or 'soil' which is the *culminating combinatory-synthetic* of "recalling of Being". But with the constraints of a reading of Descartes we cannot debate the questions which Heidegger raises of the oscillation between "the basis of philosophy" and the "basis of thinking".

"The tree of philosophy grows out of the soil in which metaphysics is rooted. The ground is the element in which... the tree lives".¹¹

If we have included, following Descartes, metaphysics in the general metaphors of the Tree we cannot forget that as the 'roots', it is the site, the *situating combinatory* from which we can undertake a seeing of the "unconcealment" of the ground. The entire determining conjuncture of metaphysics in the Cartesian text is the analytic field underlying the edifice, whose conceptualities are to be visualized using the tool of metaphors if we are to even recognise Cartesian thought. The fundamental element with which we concern ourselves is subjectivity (as seen earlier) but understood with its necessary conjunctions with the devices God, Evil Genius, the *res cogitans*, the body, the pineal, doubt, etc. These analytic elements "would not be the same.... if the roots did not live in it."¹²

The Cartesian "Philosophy does not concentrate on its ground. It always leaves its ground by means of metaphysics. And yet it never escapes the ground".¹³

However this 'grund' (ground) 'soil' does not entail a simple origin or rather the question of the soil is the question of dispersal, without a signifying break where the discourse of origins can return to be situated. One certainly grants a theoretico-historical determination-series but it is puerile to consider 'origin' as implicit in this relentless projection on the horizon of language. A horizon which can never be "seized by the freezing impression of completion" (Derrida). The 'soil' can be read within Bataille's conception of General Economy, where a continuous expenditure of tropes constitutes the field. To decode this General Economy of the Cartesian Tree we have to overturn the restricted economy of the visible. It involves the overcoming of the *phenomenology* of the *combinatory* and entering the double-space of analytic and excess.

The Colophon of Doubt

Veracitas Deus & Seeing

In the metaphoric conjunction of subjectivity "the Symbolic function" of doubt "presents itself as a double movement". Doubt is objectified only in order to restore to this action' in due course its place within the grounding-field. Here operating *continually* "lies the whole process

of a function in which the action i.e., Doubt and knowledge alternate". The 'continually' in the preceding statement valorizes Sartre in what he calls "the reflective achievement of Descartes". Where the subjectivity/cogito is drawn from the limits of the "infinitesimal instant". Tracing the cross-temporal hieroglyphics of thought, Sartre demolishes the notion of a limited doubt and await the foundation of "a conduct", "a mode of being" and a "presence before objects". It is this "presence" before objects that the analytic field of Descartes denies. He writes in the 1639 letter to Mersenne on Truth that it is a "notion so transcendently clear that it is impossible not to know it". The immediacy of truth is implicitly connected with the presence of objects when they are presented as objects to true thoughts; where the 'things' of Scholasticism are received in an epistemic frame of intellection. Cartesian epistemology intervenes to displace the scholastic affinity with objects as always-already presented and 'real'.

'Species' : the apprehension of the 'accidentals' whereby the mind in a sense becomes the objects (the puerile, commonsensical notion unsettled by Copernicus and the advent of the Machine-trope where things are not what they seem) is rejected by Descartes. Here we can see with Jean-Luc Marion how the entire structure of 'the given' is transformed (a formed, disappearance of form) by an abstraction and is reduced to that which can be an object of thought.

Aristotle's 'form', the target of Aristotelian Science is subsumed, under the epistemological sign of 'intellect', which measures the validity of objects to constitute on 'essential' foundation. Descartes by the necessary elision of the 'atomon eidos' (indivisible form of the individual thing) reduces the epistemological character of everything to an intellection by the 'subjectivity' from which he generates all his tropic-continuities. Objects are retained in the objective appearing to the subject. Yet it is this presencing in which the Cartesian epistemology remains enveloped. The mind retains 'substantial form' by means of which it overturns the Aristotelian 'nous' and 'eidos' as points of departure for knowledge from where the cartesian subject can unleash the chains of tropic investments in order to ensure a recurrence of this subjectivity' as 'cogito'. With the analogy of the piece of beeswax Descartes initiates the discourse which elaborates the 'immediacy' of objects preached by his Jesuit teachers, and opens up the act of misrecognition which is perpetuated

by the senses. "Stripped of its vestments" the piece of beeswax refutes the epistemic validity of the senses and valorizes the "inspectio" (intuition) of the mind whereby the object as such is 'known' in the act of presencing itself (to the inspectio).

For the cartesian notation of certainty to unfold it needs a necessary conjunction with the metaphoric field of infinity— God (the gap between cogitatio (thought) and Cogitatum (what is thought)). With this conjunction the sensuous trace of the entire corpus symbolicum of subjectivity is effaced in the Baroque tumult of the cartesian effort. Inundated with the darkness of failed signs Descartes pitches his paranoia onto the metaphoric surface of "Veracitas Deus" (God's love of truth) to reconquer the spaces lost under the sign of "aliquis deus" (Evil Genius) literally 'Some God'. God becomes the "positivity" in Descartes Textual ground, opening the phase of ontology.

Following Sartre we grant that all ontology springs from a reflective experience and accept his rendering of Descartes when Reflection becomes "the privileged intuition because it apprehends consciousness" in an act of present and instantaneous immanence. Reflection is seen in the cartesian metaphoric as recognition. Where in the epistemological seeing of the metaphoric surface of the text of the Tree we are able to reflect the recognition of the "Disguised soil" in conjunction with the corpus of Descartes 'ouvre'. The pre-Kantian philosophy of full presence can be read with Descartes in the matrix of Dieu/God (infinity).

The other conjunction of the subject trope is what can be called the negative ontology of error. A negative ontology being that which traces the Being of an absence. The cartesian system can be read into the fulcrum of error. The entire tropic system which fragments in Descartes epistemology can be gathered with the elucidation of what has been called the negative ontology of error. To uncover the specificity of the cartesian cogito and its 'knowledge' in the general metaphoric of the tree and to consider the difference which constitutes subjectivity in Kant, and in the Husserlian transcendental we have recourse to the history of philosophy. Subjectivity, the dialectic of will and understanding, volitional dynamics enter the historiography of philosophy with Descartes. In ancient thought there is no status of the responsibility of a subject in the discussion of fault (which largely bears the heading of error). It is the nature of the object which enters into fault and occasions the error of Judgment. Error is 'a parte objecti'!

Borrowing Jean-Marie Benoist's strategy we read into Anitiquity (with the Socratic 'no one wills evil') and the Middle Ages (*Omnis peccans est ignorans*) "an initial impossibility for thinkers to conceive of the notion of subjects". (Certain Thomist ideas contravene such a claim). The example cited by Benoist is that of Plato's *Theaetetus* and the metaphor of the dovecote "where the black one lets itself be taken in the place of the white one". In the Cartesian circle the 'proper' (eigentlich) narrative of the subject consists in a specific alchemy where we proceed from 'subject' (tropic) to the epistemology (certainty, clarity, indubitability arising from the absence of error) to the indubitable intuition of Thinking (*cogito*) which confirms being (subjectivity). From the "Sleep" of error one awakes into the 'certainty' of seeing.

Descartes' Dioptric, in spite of its geometrical turn, does not exhaust the subjectifying relation which inheres in the field of vision. Seeing remains to a certain extent in the history of philosophy from Plato, Berkeley, Kant to Benoist, Derrida and Lacan that, where the figural constellations of subjectivity find themselves.

The prolix discourse which will inhabit a theory of vision will concern us because of the objects of apprehension and their presencing in Descartes' *Ouvre*, especially the exposition of identity revealed as the identity of Thought and Being in Descartes (elaborated in Hegel's phenomenology) find its place here. The discourse of 'seeing' opens within the tropic perimeter of the object and the image. Descartes needs to preserve a difference between these in order to consider meaningfully a theory of vision. Image is located with 'sign and words' which have "no manner of resemblance to the things they signify". Thus objects are left outside the eye, the subject figure which has already inscribed the cartesian Di-optric in its tropic temporality.

The pineal, the epistemology, the expulsion of the body, this entire plethora opens up the discussion of what we can with Lacan term the "scopic drive". Descartes proceeds from an apprehension of thinking to a reconciliation of this apprehension as a 'ground' whereby the subject emerges. The mediating force of what Lacan calls 'The Colophon of Doubt' expunges the "scopic field" of its intensity whereby though acting as a gradient for thought to return to itself, the repetition of seeing grasps the available representation as those of the subject. The problematic which can be inserted here is the elision of the 'world'

in the domain of these representations.

The Pineal and the Hommonculus

Following the metaphors of the pineal we arrive at Descartes' attribution of a corporeality to the eye, the "phantasia vel imaginatio", "the sensus communis" and the "phantasy" which is the "genuine part" which separates and retains distinctness to give us "what we entitle" memory. The memory of the soil, a "spiritual memory" is restrained in the form of the analytic and the ceaseless exchanges of repetition which form the peripheries of this field. The "wax/seal analogy" is pressed forward to clarify the passive receptivity of the sentient body. The presencing of objects invades the surface of this tropic retinue to complete the senses in their functionality. The body is brought back into the discourse via projections of this process into the 'pineal'. The "seeing" of the dual image cannot be retained if the transcendental centrality of the 'cogito' is to remain undisturbed. The 'double' is effaced by the "spirits" which encircle the pineal gland. *Vision is normalized.* It is proper and finally itself when this process acts immediately on the soul. Subjectivity and representation in this instantaneous process are drawn into continuity.

Spinoza in the part V of '*Ethics*' examines the pineal as what he calls a hypothesis "far more occult than all the occult qualities". He interrogates the cartesian exclusion of the body and its subsequent union for which he claims Descartes could not "assign a cause" and hence has to "recur to the cause of the whole universe that is to God".¹⁴ Thus exchange in self-reference becomes a mark of the cartesian metaphoric field. So the Cartesian subject or 'hommonculus' (artificial man, monster of the Alchemists) as Lacan labels him arises from the 'arbe cartisienne'. Nietzsche's 'fantastic tree' (arbe fantastique) comes to us out of 'wunder ursprung' (wonderful origins) and revels in multiplicity, displaced perspectives and the absence of any reference to a definitive centre. Descartes tree came to us in a reading of the signifying soil which holds it in place and permits its *combinatory extensions*.¹⁵ The certainty of this "hommonculus" arrives with the tree in the Real, the carnival of lived reactions and envelopes the fleeting reality when it appears.

Like "the philosophers mocked by Plato" of whom Lacan reminds us who were "so driven for their appetite for reality that they went about embracing Trees".

We too with them and with Descartes embrace the Tree but we make it our own. It lives on in our discursive life haunted by the strange life cycles of the "Hommonculus".

Appendix

The entire purpose of the reading of the Tree within a *general semiotics* is to locate the figural structure of the given text (in this case Descartes). We try to locate the effectivities which are unleashed by S/s condition. Saussure himself in the celebrated 'pg 67' the 'cours' articulates the separation of the signifier and signified not only from each other but from the sign' of which they are 'parts'. What is the nature of this separation which marks the pure arbitration of signs? How do 'concepts' lie determined/undetermined in the figures of language? Can 'concepts' operate in Philosophy driven by 'transferences?' This 'amalgam of signifiers cannot suffice as Philosophy. The project would be to delineate the notional fields in which the signifiers and signifieds are in Lacan's words knotted together (points de capiton). "The Anchorage points at which they coincide" (Barthes) and mark Reason itself. It is 'begriff' (concept) which must as a faculty of the understanding determine the 'grenze-begriff' (limiting concepts) for signifiers.

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NOTES & REFERENCES

1. The constraint of space does not permit a discussion of Ricouer and Husserl in this attempt.

2. Any work (in English) however modest on Descartes is always indebted to scholars like Grene, L. J. Beck, Iverach and N. K. Smith.
3. *Relegio Medici* : C.U.P., Cambridge 1955.
4. The visible notation of the 17th Century is equally well illustrated in the textualities which trace the practice of Jesuit-Julian Maunoir (1606-1683) who used visual means "in catechizing the people". He used "charts depicting the life of Christ, the seven deadly sins, hell and so on". At the end of the 16th Century the Autobiography of Ignatius himself is marked by the episode of "seeing with the understanding" on the banks of the River Cardoner, which he describes : "The eyes of the understanding began to open, it was not that he beheld any vision, but rather he comprehended and understood many things..." cf. pp. 31-33 *La spiritualite de La Compagnie de Jesus*, Joseph de Guibert SJ I.H.S.J. : Roms 1953.
5. Letter (1647) to Picot, translator of the 'Principles'.
6. This phrase seems to also indicate a repetition of this utterance in its literality.
7. Roland Barthes considers the 'barred' in Lacan to convey the repression of the signified in the signifying process.
8. P.98 (V) F.C. Copleston : *History of Philosophy* Vol. 3 Part II Image Books, New York 1963.
9. The semiotic signified for Barthes remains 'Lekton' (utterable) of the Stoics which can be defined only within the signifying process. The point being not to reduce it to 'tugkhanon' (real thing) but elaborate it as concept, which sets the notation for the 'Real' rather than being inseparable from it.
10. Compare Wittgenstein who, by understanding the subject as "limit of the world" uncovers the primal tropic space which resurfaced with modernity. The eye analogy for subjectivity in the *Tractatus* replays the entire modern encapsulation of subjectivity within the 'visible' figure. That which does the seeing is the limit and in a very twisted way becomes 'the ground' in Descartes : the inaugurating articulation which becomes the fulcrum of repetition.
11. Martin Heidegger : 'The way back into the ground of Metaphysics' in W. Kaufman (ed.), *Existentialism— From Dostoyevsky to Sartre* P. 208. Meridian Books : London 1957.

12. *Ibid.* p. 208.
13. *Loc.cit.*
14. *Ethics*- Benedict de Spinoza, Tr. A. Boyle, Everyman, London : 1950.
15. For Descartes "the method of 'proof'" is divided into analytic and synthetic. "Analysis shows the true way by which a thing was methodically derived as it were effect from cause (from end to sign)" Synthesis contrariwise employs an opposite, (method' one in which the search goes as it were from effect to cause" (from sign to end)— (Descartes Reply to the Sixth Objection in Haldane & Ross (ed). *Philosophical Works of Descartes* Vol. 2 Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1977 pp. 48-49.

MERCI : M. Jal (the 'gift of the Afterword'), 'Arladne' and her 'thread' (for the magical contemplation of identity) and Josh (the teacher of 'tropes' and 'Scatos').