Anagrammatology:
Derrida before Saussure's Anagram Notebooks*

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Abstract

This article revisits *Of Grammatology's* reading of Ferdinand de Saussure. It narrows attention onto Saussure's *cahiers d'anagrammes*, which involved speculative work on arcane principles of composition in the poetry of antiquity, a hypothesis which Saussure pursued over several years (1905-1909) of extensive research that remained unresolved and unpublished. The article contends that Derrida's guarded references to Saussure's anagrams are more significant than is immediately apparent. The critical ideas and writing strategies they open onto in Derrida's work might be thought of in terms that tie in not so much with a grammatology, but with an *anagrammatology*. Accordingly, the play of anagrammatism in Derridean modes of composition and argumentation is reviewed, particularly in relation to *Glas.* The conclusion is that the patterns of influence when Derrida places himself before the anagram notebooks make the suggestion of *anagrammatology* more complex than the mere *esprit* might convey.

Keywords: *anagrammatology, Derrida, Saussure, anagram notebooks,* Of Grammatology*,* Glas

Introduction

When in 1967 Derrida published *Of Grammatology*, amplifying an *annus mirabilis* that also featured *Writing and Difference* and *Speech and Phenomena* while absorbing the longer-term effect of his landmark address at the 1966 'The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man' conference at the Johns Hopkins Humanities Center, what was immediately registered in Paris as being significant to the progress of that which Anglo-American contexts would later call 'theory' was the critique – the *deconstruction*, as it soon came to be thought of – of structuralist paradigms underlying the work of figures like Ferdinand de Saussure and Claude Lévi-Strauss.[1] This article addresses, specifically, Derrida's engagement with Saussure. Not the Saussure of the foundationally influential *Course in General Linguistics*, but the 'other Saussure', the one whose hitherto unsuspected existence made it possible to pun on 'deux Saussure'.[2]

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* NOTE: Bibliographic footnotes are provided only where amplification of points in the main text is immediately pertinent. Other bibliographic support can be found at the end of the essay.

[1] Derrida's 1966 Baltimore address would later be published as 'Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', in *Writing and Difference*, trans., with an introduction and additional notes, by Alan Bass (London and New York: Routledge, 1978), 278-93. For a history of the reception of the New French Theory in Anglo-American contexts, see *French Theory in America*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer and Sande Cohen (New York: Routledge, 2001).

[2] See, for instance, Georges Redard, 'Deux Saussure?', *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* 32 (1978): 27-41, and also the special number of *Recherches* 16 (1974), called 'Deux Saussure'; the pun appears also in

If that pun holds, it is because for a time between 1906 and 1909, and therefore concurrently with the work that would lead to the *Course*, Saussure was working on the supposition that an inordinately broad range of the poetry of antiquity was composed on the basis of an arcane anagrammatic principle that encrypted the names of gods or heroes (hence, the further term *hypograms*) or theme-words (hence his other term, *paragrams*) in dispersed syllabic form over the body of the verse. This practice, in Saussure's hypotheses, would have been engaged in by the poets partly in tribute to the subject of their verse but partly as a cryptopoetic form of composition that had its own initiations and mysteries. Revelations about this other 'nocturnal' Saussure – the one who worked in plainer sight and light was the one of the *Course* – was emerging right around the time that Derrida was working on *Of Grammatology*.[3] Their emergence was largely a result of the editing by Jean Starobinski – more noted, at the time, as a scholar of Rousseau, whose 'Essay on the Origin of Languages' Derrida of course critiques too in *Of Grammatology* – of extracts from the notebooks across the mid- to late sixties. They led to a range of reactions across a Geneva-Paris axis of bemusement, even consternation, among linguists and, later, practitioners of other disciplines too, who were only echoing the efforts of correspondents to whom Saussure had confided his hypotheses and who had urged him to, in effect, desist.[4] The tale of that bemusement deserves to be told separately, and could in fact nourish a further absorbing narrative about the rise of New French Theory, not least to trace how 'the anagram notebooks' evolved within Saussurean scholarship from being near-anathema to being accepted as a venture deserving of their own dedicated studies as well as of integration within broader interpretation of the work of the man who, despite having published only a small proportion of his extensive corpus in his own lifetime, remains secure in the routine label crediting him with being 'the father of modern linguistics'. Here, the focus falls more specifically on Derrida's reaction to Saussure's anagrams. Accordingly, this article proceeds on the following lines.

Firstly, contextualization on the anagram notebooks is provided. Only the most vital points about the notebooks can be given here. For more expansive accounts, the reader is referred to the works indicated in the footnotes and Bibliography. Secondly, an account is given of Derrida's references to the notebooks in *Of Grammatology*, which interestingly limit themselves to rather brief mentions. It might be objected that devoting an entire article to matters arising from what are almost incidental remarks is a strange way of proceeding. However, it is not as if literary criticism generally is not alert to how disproportionately significant certain passing remarks might be. It was after all Derrida himself from *Of Grammatology* and afterwards – and deconstruction more

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various other contexts discussing Saussure, however. Later critical recovery of Saussure's other unpublished writings – involving speculative work in the line of poetics on German legends like the *Nibelungenlied* and on the glossolalic utterances of the medium Mlle Hélène Smith, led to talk of a third and a fourth Saussure: see Ferdinand de Saussure, *Le leggende germaniche*, ed. Anna Marinetti and Marcello Meli (Este: Zielo, 1986), and in the Bibliography, the works by Aldo Prosdocimi and Théodore Flournoy.

[3] Derrida published articles with the titles 'De la grammatologie (I)' and 'De la grammatologie (II)' in *Critique* (1965): 1016-42, and in *Critique* (1966): 1023-53; these would later feature in *Of Grammatology*.

[4] Some of the letters in question are referenced in n. 12 below. For examples of unsympathetic reactions to the anagram notebooks in the context of studies in linguistics and poetics around the time of the New French Theory, see Michel Deguy, 'La folie de Saussure', *Critique* 25 (1969): 20-26, and, later, Georges Mounin, *La Linguistique de XXe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 67-8, n.

broadly too – that taught criticism the significance of that dissimulative move in argumentation that, deliberately or otherwise, downplays pivotal considerations which could yield countering insights. Paul de Man, alert to that dissimulative downplaying and to 'critics' moment of greatest blindness with regard to their own critical assumptions [being] also the moments in which those critics achieve their greatest insight' (and vice versa), and who in his own reading of Rousseau's 'Essay on the Origin of Languages' demonstrated how Derrida himself might be prey to that dynamic, provides this essay with a cue in that respect.[5] Because while it would be excessive to suggest that attention to Saussure's anagram notebooks could affect critical interpretation of Derrida's work on Saussure in quite the same way that de Man's reading revises Derridean work on Rousseau, there does remain the impression that Derrida would have intuited that what the notebooks expose was a greater propensity on Saussure's part to allow for language's (and poetry's) inscrutable operations than could be reconciled with *Of Grammatology*'s deconstruction of the *Course*. In other words, to put it bluntly – this will be nuanced later – Saussure's anagrams were *inconvenient* to Derrida. Sources which he would not have been unaware of were revealing Saussure as a more whimsical and instinctive thinker than the sobriety and system of the *Course*, or the deconstruction of the *Course*, suggest. Accordingly, and if only to see to what extent this idea of Derridean disingenuousness in regard to the anagrams holds, the actual text of the references to the anagram notebooks in *Of Grammatology* is looked at closely. This then makes it possible, in a third step, to assess the anagrams' impact on Derridean *styles*, notably in *Glas* (1974). That is then followed up in the fourth section with a review of actual references in *Glas* to the notebooks, before a concluding section that discusses what an *anagrammatology* might open onto.

Saussure's Anagram Notebooks: Archival Considerations, the Early Responses and Later Responses

In 1958 Raymond and Jacques de Saussure, sons of Ferdinand, donated to the Bibliothèque et Universitaire de Genève a number of their father's papers whose existence had been largely unsuspected. The event would gradually reshape Saussurean scholarship. It allows the idea of Saussure's influence on structuralist perspectives in linguistic and literary theory to be revisited, for what can be traced in the responses to the anagram notebooks in those fateful years coinciding with the age of new French theory (the focus of this special issue of *Word and Text*) is the sense of their greater affinity with those currents that would later be referred to as 'poststructuralist'. This affinity proved strategically important to those who pioneered the transition from a structuralist to a poststructuralist paradigm – Roman Jakobson and Julia Kristeva notably so, if to different degrees.[6] Here, what does need to be stressed is that there raged for some considerable time around Saussure's newly reconstituted corpus an 'archive fever' best read not in relation to Derrida's use of that term, but in straightforward reference to controversies over interdisciplinary claims to the revised

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[5] Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1989), 107.

[6] See the Bibliography for details of Jakobson's and Kristeva's contributions to discussion on the notebooks.

archive.[7] What started out as a dispute over the centrality of certain of the papers' contents to Saussure's thought, with linguists tending to regard them as marginal and literary theorists celebrating them as the productions of a suddenly enigmatic figure whose reformed oeuvre they could exploit, became symbolic of broader intellectual controversies whose effects were ultimately reflected even on the austere *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* (*CFS*).[8]

An immediate effect of the papers' recovery was to compel Robert Godel to revise his inventory of Saussurean manuscripts, published just a year earlier in connection with his work on archival sources of the *Course*. Godel catalogued the papers, and in 1960 published a new inventory. He reported that most of the documents recovered involved a 'long and sterile inquiry' concerning some 'singular researches'. Saussure, it appeared, had been convinced that

> in the literary works of Greek and Latin antiquity, certain exact and approximative repetitions of letters and syllables in the same passage were deliberate, and that in discovering and rigorously interpreting these recurrences and correspondences, one should find every time a keyword – generally a proper name – which was dismembered (hence *anagrams*) or inscribed in some way, filigree-like, beneath the text of the poet or prose writer (hence *hypograms*). To demonstrate the validity of his idea, he sifted patiently through a considerable number of Greek and Latin texts – up to the Latin verse of the humanists.[9]

This was a revelation, but the report's appearance in a journal like *CFS* (which, even by the standards of academe, has a specialist readership) meant that it was not until 1964, when Jean Starobinski published extracts from the manuscripts in the more mainstream *Mercure de France*, that the significance of the discoveries started to arouse interest.[10] Over the next six years, Starobinski published four more articles, each interspersing further extracts with his commentaries. A book based on the articles, *Les Mots sous les mots,* appeared in 1971.[11]

Starobinski's extracts remain an indispensable primary source for a study of Saussure's anagrams. Equally crucial would be the publication of letters by Saussure to

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[7] For details of that archive fever as it raged at the time, see my 'Annotated Bibliography of Works Referring to Ferdinand de Saussure's Anagram Notebooks. Part I: 1960–1979', *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* 55 (2002 [2003]): 269–95.

[8] *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* – hereafter *CFS* in the footnotes – was founded in 1941 as the journal of the Societé Genevoise de Linguistique. The original committee included the editors of the first edition of the *Course*, Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye; a former pupil of Saussure, Léopold Gautier; Henri Frei, who succeeded Saussure in the post of Chair of General Linguistics at the University of Geneva; and Serge Karcevski.

[9] Robert Godel, 'Inventaire des manuscrits de F. de Saussure remis à la Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève', *CFS* 17 (1960): 6.

[10] 'Les anagrammes de Ferdinand de Saussure: textes inédits', ed. Jean Starobinski, *Mercure de France,* February 1964: 243-62. Earlier references to the anagram notebooks were made by Emile Benveniste, 'Saussure après un demi-siècle', *CFS* 20 (1963): 7-21.

[11] Starobinski's four articles are indicated in the Bibliography. *Les Mots sous les mots: Les anagrammes de Ferdinand de Saussure* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971) intersperses excerpts from Saussure's manuscripts with Starobinski's commentary, the latter printed in italics. This convention follows that used in the articles, though not invariably. It was translated into English as *Words upon Words: The Anagrams of Ferdinand de Saussure,* trans. Olivia Emmet (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979). The order of presentation of the extracts presented in the book represents a shuffling of that followed in the articles; the rationale for the book's sequencing of the extracts attempts to correspond to the thematic bearing of its six-chapter divisions.

correspondents like Antoine Meillet, Charles Bally, Léopold Gautier and Giovanni Pascoli, to whom Saussure confided some of his hypotheses.[12] These allow a reconstruction of the important dates and events relevant to the evolution of Saussure's research. A notebook which may be regarded as providing Saussure's theoretical introduction to his speculations was published by Peter Wunderli.[13] In addition, David Shepheard published extracts from the manuscripts which focus on Vedic hymns and alliterative Germanic poetry. These correct the impression, formed from a reading of Godel's first disclosures, that Saussure's speculations are almost exclusively concerned with Greek and Latin texts.[14] Further important work was carried out by Herman Parret on the Saussure archive at the Houghton Library in Harvard, which is revealing about Saussure's work on theosophy and, again, on Vedic literature.[15] Additionally, a further cache of Saussurean manuscripts donated to the BPU by the Saussure estate in the late nineties revealed new terminology in Saussure's decoding protocols.[16] Since then, other thorough analytical work has been conducted by scholars like Pierre-Yves Testenoire on Saussure's decrypting of Homeric anagrams, Francis Gandon on the effort lavished on Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, and Testenoire again and Federico Bravo on the need to draw a broader view on the notebooks – all in impressive book-length studies.

There are a number of secondary sources which summarize Saussure's hypotheses and which preserved linguists' stakes in debates about the notebooks. Some appear in the proceedings of two major Saussure colloquia: 'Présence de Saussure', held in Geneva in March 1988,[17] and 'Saussure aujourd'hui', held at Cerisy-la-Salle in August 1992. Even-handed assessments in linguistics-led approaches now more reconciled to the anagrams' presence in the Saussure corpus can be found in more recent collections too, not least through the efforts of figures like Carol Sanders, François Rastier and Simon Bouquet, the latter responsible for the *Saussure* instalment in the ever-weighty *L'Herne* series. In addition, the role of two commentators should be mentioned. Wunderli's *Ferdinand de Saussure und die Anagramme* was the first book-length study of the anagram notebooks, a lone example for many years before scholars like Gandon, Testenoire and Bravo wrote their own accounts.[18] Important work was also done by

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[12] See 'Lettres de Ferdinand de Saussure à Antoine Meillet', ed. Emile Benveniste, *CFS* 21 (1964): 89-130; 'Lettres de Ferdinand de Saussure à Giovanni Pascoli', ed. Giuseppe Nava, *CFS* 24 (1968): 73-81; 'Documents saussuriennes retrouvés dans les archives d'Antoine Meillet au Collège de France', ed. Simon Bouquet, *CFS* 40 (1986): 5-9; 'Correspondance Bally-Saussure', ed. René Amacker, *CFS* 48 (1994): 91-134. The letter in which Saussure first mentioned his research on anagrams to Meillet, described as missing by Benveniste (91), is reproduced in Roman Jakobson, 'La Première lettre de Ferdinand de Saussure à Antoine Meillet sur les anagrammes', *L'homme* 11.2 (1971): 15-24; reprinted in Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings VII: Contributions to Comparative Mythology. Studies in Linguistics and Philology, 1972-1982*, ed. Stephen Rudy, pref. Linda R. Waugh (Berlin: Mouton, 1985), 237-47.

[13] Peter Wunderli, 'Ferdinand de Saussure: "1er Cahier à lire préliminairement: Ein Basistext seiner Anagrammstudien"', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 82 (1972): 193-216.

[14] David Shepheard, 'Saussure's Vedic Anagrams', *Modern Language Review* 77 (1982): 512-23, and 'Saussures Anagramme und die deutsche Dichtung', *Sprachwissenschaft* 11 (1986): 52-79.

[15] Herman Parret, 'Réflexions saussuriennes sur le temps et le moi. Les manuscrits de la Houghton Library à Harvard', in *Actes du Colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle, 12-19 août 1992*', ed. Michel Arrivé and Claudine Normand (Nanterre: CRL, Université Paris X, 1995), 39-73.

[16] See Ivan Callus, 'Parathlipse and Jalonnante: Encountering New Terminology in Ferdinand de Saussure's Anagram Notebooks', *CFS* 55 (2002): 169-202.

[17] *Présence de Saussure: Actes du Colloque International de Genève (21-23 mars, 1988)*, Publications du Cercle Ferdinand de Saussure 1, ed. René Amacker and Rudolf Engler (Geneva: Droz, 1990).

[18] Peter Wunderli, *Ferdinand de Saussure und die Anagramme: Linguistik und Literatur* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1972).

Aldo Prosdocimi, who in a number of articles provided new perspectives on the notebooks and investigated their relationship with Saussure's work on legends.[19] All these studies sit uneasily with a second group of texts which mediated literary theorists' responses to the notebooks at precisely the time, ironically, that Rudolf Engler was preparing his critical edition of the *Course*, which he published in 1968; they include work by Julia Kristeva, Michael Riffaterre, Jean Baudrillard and Jacques Lacan, among others.[20] Looking back on this latter group of texts, texts, what is deeply striking is their identity and continuity with the age of New French Theory and just how much they are of their time. More recent work with a literary bent has tended to eschew the tonalities of the critique of that time; the styles of commentators like Gandon, Bravo and Testenoire, referred to above, are exemplary in this respect.

Meanwhile, as to the notebooks themselves, what are we to make of them and their salient features? The list of authors whose work was analysed is bewildering: Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Lucretius, Seneca, Tacitus, Statius, Plautus, Pindar, Plutarch, Catullus, Suetonius, Pliny, Martial, Tibullus, Naevius, Accius, Heraclitus, Callimachos, Ennius, Ausonius, Livy Andronicus, Livy, Angelo Poliziano, Pacuvius, Petronius, Theognis, Attius, Valerius Maximus. To these should be added Vedic poetry, various Roman inscriptions and epigrammatic poetry, fragments of Lesbian poetry as well as of Renaissance and later verse, and, incredibly, letters by Cicero and Julius Caesar. The texts studied became a veritable compendium of ciphers, their authors so many legions of cryptographers. For the purpose of what follows below, what is equally poignant is 'the evidence of Saussure […] continu[ing] to be troubled by the sight of words offering themselves up *without his having looked for them* […]. This leads him to surround himself with guarantees and to exorcise coincidences, according to a neurotic protocol'[21] – one for which he (and his correspondents) could not find any rational scholarly explanation. Later scholarship would in fact show that there are analogous effects in poetry and in literature: not quite of the kind that Saussure was hypothesizing, but of a sufficiently similar nature to suggest a special kind of instance of the letter in the poetic (un)conscious, across work by writers as diverse as Guillaume de Machaut, Stéphane Mallarmé, Tristan Tzara, Georges Perec, Unica Zurn and others.[22] It is in the context of all of this rich intertext that Derrida's position before the anagram notebooks, and the idea of anagrammatology, can configure itself.

Of Grammatology's References to Saussure's Anagram Notebooks

The references in *Of Grammatology* to Saussure's anagram notebooks are not extensive. This may seem paradoxical. *Of Grammatology*'s deconstruction of the *Course* would appear to predispose it towards discovering in the notebooks pre-texts for the undermining of logocentrism. This inconspicuousness of Saussure's notebooks in *Of Grammatology* cannot be attributed to Derrida not knowing about them. Derrida refers to the excerpts published by Starobinski in *Mercure de France* (see below), and is

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[19] Of Prosdocimi's work on this theme listed in the Bibliography, the article written with Anna Marinetti is particularly important in terms of the intersections with the anagram notebooks.

[20] The texts by these authors detailed in the Bibliography mark the move from a structuralist to a poststructuralist sensibility within the New French Theory.

[21] Sylvère Lotringer, 'The Game of the Name', *diacritics* 3 (1973): 8.

[22] See the seventh chapter of Ivan Callus, *Anagrammatologies: Saussure's Anagram Notebooks in Theory and Practice*, PhD diss., University of Wales, Cardiff, 1998, for an analysis of that tradition.

unlikely to have been unaware that the 'existence of Saussure's *cahiers*' was becoming 'a titillating piece of intellectual gossip'.[23] He was also sufficiently familiar with Starobinski's other work to have realized that the latter's editorship of the notebooks was likely to prove significant. Intriguingly, as chief editor of the Pléiade edition of the *Œuvres complètes* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Starobinski was concurrently editing two of the authors deconstructed in *Of Grammatology*. Derrida handsomely acknowledges Starobinski's editing of Rousseau,[24] which makes his references to the notebooks seem comparatively grudging. Why, indeed, are Saussure's anagrams so infrequently cited in Derrida's own work? At stake might be a complex network of issues concerning filiation, indebtedness, and the anxiety to avoid that by which one might appear to have been forestalled. The situation, however, is rather more complicated, and demands careful reading of Derrida's references to Saussure's anagrams.

The first reference to the notebooks in *Of Grammatology* is the following:

> The reciprocal effect of writing on speech is 'wrong [*vicieuse*],' Saussure says, 'such mistakes are really pathological' […]. The inversion of the natural relationships would thus have engendered the perverse cult of the letter-image: sin of idolatry, 'superstition of the letter' Saussure says in the *Anagrams* where he has difficulty in proving the existence of a 'phoneme anterior to all writing.' (*OG*, 38)

This sets the tone for Derrida's subsequent references to the notebooks, marked by wary consideration of the anagrams' consonance with his project of deconstructing logocentrism's investment in privileging speech over writing. In a later reference, Derrida returns to the notebooks' links with this theme:

> Writing will appear to us more and more as another name for this structure of supplementarity. If one takes into account that, according to Rousseau himself, articulation makes possible both speech and writing (a language is necessarily articulated and the more articulated it is, the more it lends itself to writing) one should be assured of what Saussure hesitated to say in what we know of the *Anagrams*, namely, that there are no phonemes before the grapheme. That is, before that which operates as a principle of death within speech. (*OG*, 245)

This does more than reiterate the inexistence of any phoneme before the grapheme. Between these two references to the notebooks, Derrida had elaborated the ways in which the effects of *différance* impair self-presence. To accept that 'there are no phonemes before the grapheme' is to accept that there can be no origin to which the effects noted in the notebooks may be ascribed and thereby tamed. The frustration written all over the notebooks derives from Saussure's realization that in resisting attempts to ascribe their effects to an origin, the anagrams indicate language's occasional propensity to function 'outside any system of reference as well as any effect of signification'.[25] Whereas Jacques Lacan connects this potentiality to the notion of *lalangue* and Jean-Claude Milner to desire, Derrida regards the consequent insecurity as

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[23] Paul de Man, 'Hypogram and Inscription', in *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 52, n. 10.

[24] See the notes in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, corrected ed., trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997 [orig. 1967), 338-44; hereafter cited as *OG* with page references in the text. Cf. also Derrida's references in *Of Grammatology* to Starobinski's study of Rousseau, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La transparence et l'obstacle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), especially 353, n. 30, and the reference to Starobinski's *L'Œil vivant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), 141.

[25] Sylvère Lotringer, 'Le "complexe" de Saussure', *Recherches* 16 (1974): 99.

related to 'a principle of death within speech'. Derrida therefore intuited early the connections between the notebooks and death, which would be given prominence by Jean Baudrillard and by Jean-Michel Rey.

Some of the most significant of Derrida's remarks on the notebooks in *Of Grammatology* are found towards the end of the 'Linguistics and Grammatology' section. Derrida remarks that 'all of classical ontology' assumes 'a concept of time thought in terms of spatial movement or of the now', in a manner 'intrinsic to the totality of the history of the Occident, of what units its metaphysics and its technics'. And, in a key move, he sees this 'linearism' as 'undoubtedly inseparable from phonologism', remarking that 'Saussure's entire theory of the "linearity of the signifier"' is based in the idea of succession. He adds:

> It is a point on which Jakobson disagrees with Saussure decisively by substituting for the homogeneousness of the line the structure of the musical staff, 'the chord in music.' What is here in question is not Saussure's affirmation of the temporal essence of discourse but the concept of time that guides this affirmation and analysis: time conceived as linear successivity, as 'consecutivity.' This model works by itself and all through the Course, but Saussure is seemingly less sure of it in the *Anagrams*. (*OG*, 72)

The unsettling prospect, hinted at in the last lines of the quotation, is that Saussure, founding figure of linguistics, may have had the relevant intuition himself while compiling the notebooks, before Jakobson, before Derrida. It would imply that the theories of the sign so indebted to Saussure were suspected by Saussure himself to be insufficiently aware that the signifier need not necessarily be confined to the 'single dimension' of the line.[26] If this holds, *Of Grammatology* appears as originally incisive as it does only because Saussure's diffidence and the incomplete state of his researches on the anagrams did not force through an assiduous reconsideration of what would be proposed in the *Course*.

That is a broad claim. Before considering its implications and tenability, it may be useful to follow up certain intertextual leads. Derrida's reference to Jakobson's attention to 'the structure of the musical staff' recalls a similar remark whereby Lacan, in the very place where he invokes the anagram notebooks, observes that poetry indicates 'that all discourse is aligned along the several staves of a score'.[27] The fact that the metaphor involving music appears in Jakobson, Lacan, and Derrida suggests that if 'lalangue knows', rhetoricity is equally knowing.[28] Could Saussure's anagram notebooks reveal the blindness in Derrida's deconstruction of Saussure, in a manner analogous to that by which de Man's attention to Rousseau's statements on music in the 'Essay on the Origins of Language' allows him to deconstruct in turn Derrida's deconstruction of

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[26] On the reassertion in the notebooks of linearity's dominance, see Lotringer, 'Le "complexe" de Saussure', 106 ff.

[27] Jacques Lacan, 'The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason since Freud', in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977 [orig. 1966]), 154.

[28] See also Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans., with an introduction and additional notes, by Barbara Johnson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 163, where in the middle of an analysis of Plato's *Philebus*, Derrida remarks that Socrates punctuates his discourse on letters with a detour on the correspondences with musical intervals (*diastemata*). The relevance of music in discussions of the notebooks appeared as early as Kristeva's 'Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes', in *Sèméiotikè: Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (Paris: Seuil, 1969), 191, n. 15, where reference is made to 'an algebraic-musical, translinguistic scene'.

Rousseau?[29] Are the notebooks located at the blind spot of Derrida's critical insight, facilitating that insight through their very non-invocation and non-citation, but undermining it the moment they come into full view?

It is a tempting scenario. Critical attention should however focus on an endnote which follows on at a paragraph's distance from the passage quoted above. The sentence to which the endnote is appended reads:

> It is thus the idea of the sign that must be deconstructed through a meditation upon writing which would merge, as it must, with the undoing (*sollicitation*) of onto-theology, faithfully repeating it in its *totality* and *making it insecure* in its most assured evidences. (*OG*, 73)

This reiterates the urgency of deconstructing logocentric constructions of the linguistic sign. Saussure's *Course* would no doubt be a primary target. Derrida, however, is more circumspect. The text of the endnote includes the following observation:

> Suffice it to say here that it is not impossible that the literality of the Course, to which we have indeed had to refer, should one day appear very suspect in the light of unpublished material now being prepared for publication. I am thinking particularly of the *Anagrams* [now published, see note 4]. […] What I could read – and equally what I could not read – under the title of *A Course in General Linguistics* seemed important to the point of excluding all hidden and 'true' intentions of Ferdinand de Saussure. If one were to discover that this text hid another text – and there will never by anything but texts – and hid it in a determined sense, the reading that I have just proposed would not be invalidated, at least for that particular reason. Quite the contrary. (*OG*, 329, n. 38)

This extraordinary passage demands an appreciation of Derrida's predicament at the time of its writing. *Of Grammatology* was contemporaneous with Starobinski's ongoing publication of excerpts from the notebooks; indeed, it should be remembered that extracts from it first appeared in *Critique* in 1965, when only the first of five groups of extracts which would be published by Starobinski had appeared.[30] At the time, therefore, Derrida could have had little way of knowing what the excerpts from the notebooks would reveal, as indicated by the phrase 'in the light of material now being prepared for publication'. He was in the unfortunate situation of deconstructing an author whose corpus was being reconstituted at the very moment of the deconstruction. This created scope for a discomfiting belatedness. The deconstructive manoeuvre in *Of Grammatology* risked belatedness insofar as it was based on a Saussure who was being exceeded at the same time that he was being revealed elsewhere to have been much less sure of his perceptions of the linguistic sign than had previously been suspected. By not featuring in the deconstruction, therefore, the 'anagrammatically' reconstituted Saussurean corpus pre-empts it. The newly reconfigured corpus becomes capable of reserving unexpected twists, thereby potentially conferring, through its *re*construction, an unsettling vulnerability on Derrida's *de*construction of Saussure.

It is with these considerations in mind that the endnote should be read. For if the Saussure corpus is in the process of being re-membered at the very moment that Derrida

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[29] See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, ed. Charles Porset (Paris: Nizet, 1979 [orig. 1781]), and Paul de Man, 'The Rhetoric of Blindness: Jacques Derrida's Reading of Rousseau', in *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, intr. Wlad Godzich, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1989), 102-41. Derrida's most sustained comments on music in *Of Grammatology* are found on 195 ff.

[30] Cf. Jacques Derrida, 'De la grammatologie (I)', *Critique* 21 (1965): 1016-42, and 'De la grammatologie (II)', *Critique* 22 (1966): 1023-53, which do not carry the observation quoted.

writes his endnote, doubts may start to multiply on whether it is the anagram notebooks, rather than the *Course*, which convey the 'hidden and "true" intentions of Ferdinand de Saussure'. That would make the reliability of the *Course*, in Derrida's words, 'very suspect'.[31] Derrida would have deconstructed not Saussure's intentions, but their pale and distorted reflection. Mindful of the problem, Derrida compresses a defence into the last five sentences of the above quotation.

The defence is premised on the assumption that criticism must base itself on what is within the text, not what is, or might be, without. Accordingly, Derrida strongly hints that any discoveries concerning Saussure's anagrams are not 'pertinent' to a deconstruction of the *Course*. The 'literality' of the *Course* – its text as presently constituted – is established 'within a system of readings, influences, borrowings, refutations, etc' that cannot in their complex totality be sidelined simply because of the surfacing of new archival material. That intertext, which with all its complex affiliations 'dominates contemporary linguistics and semiology', remains intact, reconfigured no doubt by the new discoveries, but nevertheless intact and as such deconstructible. The *Course* and its deconstruction 'would not be invalidated' even if it could be shown that they 'hid another text': an obvious allusion to the notebooks. If anything – and herein lies the significance of the phrase 'Quite the contrary' — the notebooks might be cited in reinforcement of the deconstruction. They could confirm, if required *but not indispensably*, that the *Course*'s investment in logocentrism is vulnerable, and that Saussure himself may not have been unaware of this.[32]

This is ingenious, but it is essentially a plea. The readers of *Of Grammatology* are being asked not to allow the publication of excerpts from the notebooks to distract their attention from the deconstruction of the *Course*. To insist that the *Course* and its intertext should be approached in isolation of concurrent developments in Saussurean scholarship is to disregard the fact that another (inter)textual entity, that involving the newly disseminated contents of the *Anagrams* and their relation to the *Course*, has been constituted. The real problem, of course, which Derrida could not afford to dwell on, was the timing. Had the publication history of the notebooks and *Of Grammatology* been different, Derrida might well have incorporated references to the former, thereby giving much greater representation to the intriguing implications contained in the little phrase 'Quite the contrary'. An interesting question therefore suggests itself. What might Derrida have stressed had he been in a position to grant greater prominence to the notebooks?

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[31] It is for this reason that at the end of the note Derrida invokes Bally's and Sechehaye's preface to the first edition of the *Course*. The relevant passage in the preface reads:

'We are aware of our responsibility to our critics. We are also aware of our responsibility to the author, who probably would not have authorized the publication of these pages.

This responsibility we accept wholly, and we would willingly bear it alone. Will the critics be able to distinguish between the teacher and his interpreters? We would be grateful to them if they would direct toward us the blows which it would be unjust to heap upon one whose memory is dear to us.' *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Riedlinger, trans. Wade Baskin, intr. Jonathan Culler, rev. ed. (London: Fontana-Collins, 1974), xxxii.

[32] The *Course* is credited by its editors with the signature 'Saussure', but this occludes the extent to which the *Course* is the result of the editors' constructions, made on the basis of the manuscript sources. It also overlooks the fact that Saussure's name might be added to this list in *Of Grammatology*: 'It would be frivolous to think that "Descartes," "Leibniz," Rousseau," "Hegel," etc. are names of authors […]. The indicative values I attribute to them is first the name of a problem' (*OG*, 99). Again, the fact that Engler was re-editing the *Course* even as this was being written weighs heavily here.

To ask the question is very bad form if 'there is no outside-text' (OG, 158). Nevertheless, the question can profitably be posed, because an attempt at an answer can, I believe, highlight an issue of some importance. It concerns the technological dimension of writing. It is not too speculative to surmise that Derrida might have been interested in the following passage from the notebooks:

> It is […] in moving on from the basic idea of an Indo-European poetry which analyzes the phonic substance of words (to make of it either an acoustic series or a series which acquires significance through allusions to a particular name) that I thought I could understand for the first time the famous German *stab*, in its triple sense of (a) rod; (b) an alliterative phoneme of a poem; (c) letter.[33]

What is intriguing here is the role of the *stab* as material signifier. Saussure's supposition was that the *vates* would have used the *stab* in support of 'the phonic elements of a poem [having] to be counted'. He concludes:

> […] I believe that the equation *stab = phoneme* antedates all writing and is absolutely independent of *buoch*, which precedes it in the current German compound word, *Buchstrabe* (evidently, beech-rod).[34]

Jean-Claude Milner remarks incisively on this:

> [T]he descriptions should be reread […] in which Saussure conjures up the scene of the *vates* counting with the aid of sticks the relevant phonemes, thereby carrying out exactly what the philologist turns out retroactively to have to repeat. Saussure thus becomes in fact the point of subjectivity that he supposed in this knowledge, and the research on the anagrams turns into the exhausting and vain reenactment of a primal scene, in which, in the unfolding of a story and the subjectivisation of the *locus princeps*, the distance from language to what exceeds it is bridged.[35]

The significance of Milner's words lies not in their psychoanalytic inclinations, but in the suggestion (in the allusion to 'the reenactment of a primal scene' of writing) that the passage might have confirmed Derrida's supposition that the notebooks' contents would not necessarily contradict *Of Grammatology*'s deconstruction of Saussure. In conjuring up the figure of the *vates*, and making him responsible for the hypogram, Saussure's observations conform to a pattern analysed in *Of Grammatology*. The *vates* is not radically different, in his privileged manipulation of sticks as a primitive form of writing, to the leader of the Nambikwara tribe whom Claude Lévi-Strauss represented as suddenly intuiting the power of writing. The sticks represent a mnemonics, a primitive alphabetism, and a rudimentary script, and are thereby implicated in Derrida's analysis of such techniques and his deconstruction of the logocentric idea of writing as corrupting full presence (see *OG*, 107 ff.). In addition, belief in the hypogrammatic insertion by the *vates* of the proper name would render the notebooks vulnerable to further deconstruction. Saussure's recourse to the securities of that proper – Sylvère Lotringer regards it as 'a maniacal protocol of nomination'[36] – aggravated that vulnerability.

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[33] Starobinski, *Words upon Words,* 24-6.
[34] Starobinski, *Words upon Words*, 26.
[35] Jean-Claude Milner, *For the Love of Language* trans. and intr. Ann Banfield (London: Macmillan, 1990), 116.
[36] Lotringer, 'Le "complexe" de Saussure', 110.

Indeed, it may be instructive to consider how Lotringer approaches the issue of the *stab* and its relations to the proper. Lotringer remarks that speech cannot analyse its own interiority other than through an exterior instrument to which is assigned a representative function. Saussure's evocation of the scene in which, for the *vates*, pebbles and sticks stand in for phonemes, represses the functioning of that instrument by suppressing the 'stick-phoneme-letter genealogy' and emphasizing the 'stab = phoneme' connection.[37] This is unapologetically Derridean. What Lotringer has done is to seize on Saussure's statement in the notebooks, 'I believe that the equation *stab* = phoneme antedates all writing',[38] and expose its complicity with logocentrism's investment in the belief that speech mediates the presence to itself of the self-same. The recourse to the Derridean diction in of *Of Grammatology* is unabashed, as Lotringer characterizes writing as 'nothing other than this logic of supplementarity', indefinitely impairing 'the self-presence of speech'.[39] Besides, the hypogram enables the reinscription of 'homogeneity, linearity, unity, meaning'.[40] All of these are threatened by the anagrams, and it is therefore not surprising that Saussure should have recoiled and rendered them anodyne through recourse to the recuperative strategies available through linguistics, the science which was possibly founded in opposition to this menace. Only with poststructuralism, with its interest in the heterogeneous, in the a-linear, in multiplicity, in the whimsical and the singular, were those dangers embraced. In a representative statement, Lotringer observes that the anagram is not 'a regulated dislocation' but a 'radical, unfixable multiplicity which undoes all codes'.[41] It is here that the structuralist mindset can be seen to decisively move to a poststructuralist sensibility. As Roland Barthes memorably put it when speaking of 'Roland Barthes',

> he had learned a great deal from Saussure's *Cours*, but Saussure had come to mean infinitely more to him since he discovered the man's desperate pursuit of the Anagrams: in many scientists, he suspected a similar kind of happy flaw, but for the most part, they dared not proceed to the point of making a whole work out of such a thing: their utterance remained choked, stiff, indifferent.[42]

 This is indicative enough of why for poststructuralism the dissemination of the notebooks was timely. It remains a piquant irony that *Of Grammatology*, long regarded as a totemic poststructuralist text, should have appeared just too early to do them full justice.

For Derrida, therefore, Saussure's anagrams are sufficiently close to his concerns to warrant complicatedly guarded responses marked by disingenuousness and a playing down of the notebooks' significance. Why might that have occurred? It would be because for Saussure it was becoming clearer that the cause for what he was encountering lay within language's own operations, which resist schematism and tidiness. As Jean-Michel Rey put it in an important article for any encounter with deconstructive and psychoanalytic responses to the notebooks, '*language offers itself its own aliases*' by following its own rhythms and cadences, by refiguring its own infinite

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[37] Sylvère Lotringer, 'Le dernier mot de Saussure', *L'Arc* 54 (1973): 74-5.

[38] Starobinski, *Words upon Words*, 25-6.

[39] See Lotringer, 'Le "complexe" de Saussure', 96-7, for further remarks on the issue.

[40] Lotringer, 'Le dernier mot', 77.

[41] Lotinger, 'Le "complexe" de Saussure', 112.

[42] Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Macmillan, 1977 [orig. 1975]), 160.

fortuitousness.[43] De Man eloquently speaks of the Saussure of the anagrams coming up, in language, against a 'terror glimpsed', an impropriety within the conduct of the signifier that resisted the schematism of the *Course* or any (proto-)structuralist rationalization. At work was 'a supernumerary element' which is not reducible or subservient to the order of meaning'.[44] This unaccountability, together with language's irrepressible plasticity – a factor insisted on throughout Rey's commentary[45] – undermines the ability of the linguist and the analyst to *account for* language's capacity to subvert perspicuity and frustrate analysis. It would seem that what cannot be borne to be confronted, so to speak, is the presence within language of what might be thought of as an almost protoplasmic quality, self-willed, independent of any (un)conscious agency, capable of shaping language unpredictably, endlessly. Rey thereby subscribes to the broad consensus within poststructuralist accounts of Saussure's anagrams: namely, that Saussure's hypogram and his discussion of the *stab* represent despairing efforts to tame what the notebooks unleash. It is this that determines the conclusion that although Saussure might have had a number of intuitions which seem proto-poststructuralist, the anagram notebooks are not, ultimately, poststructuralist in their oversight. Saussure, the proto-structuralist, left one project unpublished, the *Course*, overtaken by the enormity of what he was broaching; Saussure, the proto-poststructuralist, abandoned another, the anagrams, overcome by the imponderability of what he was intuiting. There is poignancy in this double scene of unresolved prefiguration.

Glas and Anagrammatism

What Saussure prefigured, Derrida's *Glas* can be said to have strategized. Gregory Ulmer called *Glas* 'an essay in *post*criticism' founding 'a new academic writing'.[46] Ulmer's statement foregrounds the link between the *post-* prefix and the prospect of a writing, an *écriture*, to come. The implications will here be brought to bear upon Saussure's anagrams and eventually on the term *anagrammatology*. If, indeed, Saussure's notebooks can be shown to have anticipated or even influenced the deployment of anagrammatism in theory, their status as pre-texts for 'a new academic writing' would be appreciably enhanced.

The language of deconstruction, concerned, like that of psychoanalysis, with what is 'not susceptible to being signified except symbolically and anasemically', recognizes that 'the anasemic translation must twist its tongue to speak the non-linguistic conditions of language'.[47] 'Derrida's strategy for exceeding the limits of philosophical discourse is *to learn to write the way the Wolf Man spoke*'.[48] It is not surprising,

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[43] Jean-Michel Rey, 'Saussure avec Freud', in *Parcours de Freud* (Paris: Galilée, 1974), 68-9. It should be noted that crucial work in this respect has been done by Michel Arrivé (see Bibliography); if Rey's is the text cited here and below, it is because of its greater chronological proximity to the age of New French Theory that is the focus of this special issue of *Word and Text*.

[44] Rey, 67-8.

[45] See, especially, the section entitled 'La Voix et le mime', 79-91.

[46] Gregory L. Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in John P. Leavey, Jr., *Glassary* (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 23 (emphasis added).

[47] Jacques Derrida, 'Me – Psychoanalysis: An Introduction to the Translation of "The Shell and the Kernel" by Nicolas Abraham', trans. Richard Klein, *diacritics* 9.1 (1979): 10.

[48] Gregory L. Ulmer, *Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 60 (emphasis added).

therefore, that Derrida should have endorsed phrases of Nicolas Abraham's (the Hungarian psychoanalyst) like 'a-semantic instance' and 'scandalous anti-semantics',[49] both of which designate the operations of the anasemic. What becomes intriguing here is how anagrammatism becomes implicated in a text like *Glas*, to which the anasemic operations of 'scandalous anti-semantics' are fundamental.[50]

Rudy Steinmetz's work is important in this respect, as it highlighted the importance in Derrida's work of such anasemia proceeding through 'a disseminating aesthetics'.[51] This might suggest that Derrida's work could contain near-analogues to the process in Saussure's notebooks by which a theme word is paragrammatically dispersed along ancient verse. Saussure's hypograms and Derrida's disseminative effects are not quite on a par (the latter fulfil a cognitive and strategic as well as a rhetorical function), but the comparison is there to be made.[52] Before the tenability of this analogy can be assessed further, some attention to the broader strategies of Derrida's styles is necessary. A benchmark is set by a figure which, like the anagram, has a reputation for triviality and becomes co-implicated in Derrida's anagrammatic play: the pun.

Ulmer remarks that 'Derrida entertains a theory of writing that reassesses certain elements of discourse that until now have been treated as dysfunctions and aberrations.'[53] Like the anagram, the pun has traditionally exemplified such aberrations. Derrida ups the stakes himself, referring to the disdain with which the pun, as 'the exercise of virtuosity to no profit, without economy of sense or knowledge', is often perceived in 'the academic institutions that feel themselves responsible for the seriousness of science and philosophy'.[54] Ulmer coins the word *puncept* to characterize the 'fully developed homonymic program at work in Derrida's style'.[55] The puncept, which 'refunctions the pun into the philosopheme of a new cognition',[56] operates by following the reticular networks of a word's associations and homonyms. To select an example which will be anagrammatically overwritten below, one of the more complex puncepts in *Glas* is that centring on the *navette*. Ulmer shows how multiple associations of *navette* impinge on *Glas*: the shuttle movement 'referring to the "to and fro" motion which bears this name in weaving, sewing and transportation'; 'a type of seed, a plant in the family of crucifers'; 'a small vessel for incense'; and 'a weaver's movement', setting up a connection with 'Freud's famous anecdote of the game that his grandson played with a bobbin on a string' and 'the *fort-da* stitch'.[57]

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[49] Derrida, 'Me – Psychoanalysis', 7 and 9.

[50] For further insights into the correspondences between anagrammatism and anasemia, see Stefano Agosti, *Cinque analisi: Il testo della poesia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1982) 45-66, and, for the further cryptanalytic associations, Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: A Cryptonymy*, trans. Nicholas Rand, foreword by Jacques Derrida (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), and, for a broader view, Jacob Rogozinksi, *Faire part: Cryptes de Derrida* (Paris: Lignes, 2005).

[51] Rudy Steinmetz, *Les Styles de Derrida* (Brussels: De Boeck, 1994), 92.

[52] See Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans., with an introduction and additional notes, by Barbara Johnson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981 [orig. 1972]); hereafter *D* with page references in the text.

[53] Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 25c.

[54] Jacques Derrida, 'Proverb: "He that would pun . . .''', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 18.

[55] Gregory [L.] Ulmer, 'The Puncept in Grammatology', in *On Puns: The Foundation of Letters* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1988), 168.

[56] Ulmer, 'The Puncept in Grammatology', 165.

[57] Ulmer, 'The Puncept in Grammatology', 185-6.

Is there more, then, to the linguistic signifier than Saussure's doctrine of its arbitrariness could ever comprehend, or are puncepts merely the showpieces of a new, sophisticated Cratylism? The tension between Saussure's perception of the arbitrariness of the sign and the implications which follow from his notebooks is central here, and will be addressed below. For the moment, however, the more urgent task is to investigate whether Derrida's styles have done with the anagram what they have done with the pun. If that question can be answered affirmatively, to speak of what will be termed an *anagrammatology* being instituted in Derrida's writing may be no more or less feasible than to speak of Derrida's 'puncepts'.

Accordingly, different instances of anagrams in Derrida's texts will be examined. A first step is to demonstrate the collusion of a specific anagram with the *navette* puncept:

> [*Navette*] is (the term) I sought earlier in order to describe, when a gondola has crossed the gallery, the grammatical to and fro between *langue* (language, tongue) and *lagune* (lagoon) (*lacuna*)'.
> In short, the grids involved are the two spellings, the paragram, with only one letter out of order between them. The shuttle motion between these two words is the binding necessity of their chance occupation of the same letters.[58]

This is promising, not least because of the mention of *paragram*. Other examples present themselves. *Carte*, *écart*, *trace*, and *quatre* weave complex effects throughout *The Post Card*, while *The Truth in Painting* contains a reference to 'X, the chiasmus letter' which is 'Chi, in its normal transcription'; this comes to signify an 'other scene, following, if you like the anagrammatical inversion of *Ich*, or of *Isch* (Hebrew man)'.[59] The anagram on hymen (*hymne/hymen*) should also be recalled (*D*, 213). However, if the relevance of Saussure's notebooks to Derrida's disseminative effects is to be upheld, the anagram needs to be approached not in its transpositions of the letters of a word or phrase, but in the notebooks' sense of the textual dispersion of syllabic clusters of a theme-word. What needs to be looked out for across the surface of Derrida's texts, therefore, is the fractionization of a word and the fragments' recurrent phonetic and semantic rematerialization.

Once this is accepted, disseminative effects in Derrida's work reminiscent of Saussure's hypograms are not difficult to find. There is, first of all, Derrida's awareness of such effects in the writing of Mallarmé. Derrida comments on the recurrence in Mallarmé's texts of *or*, in its various French meanings as 'a noun signifying "Gold" and a conjunction marking a turning point in an argument' (*D*, 262; Bass's note), as well as 'the signifier OR (O + R)' in words like '"outdoors" (dehORs) "fantasmagORical," "stORe" (*trésOR*), "hORizon," "mORe" (*majORe*), "exteriOR" (*hORs*), not counting the O's, the zeROs, the null opposite of OR […]'. He also comes up with the following *trouvaille*: 'Has it ever been noted […] that the first paragraph of *Igitur* (*the Midnight*) links the words "hour," "*or*," and 'gold work," and reads 'the infinite accident of

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[58] Ulmer, 'The Puncept in Grammatology', 185.
[59] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987 [orig. 1978]), 165. This should be read in the context of *The Truth in Painting*'s reflections on '*Ich*'s hold (*prise*) over *Glas*' and of the discussion of complex signature, structural, and homophonic effects instigated by *Ich* (157 ff.).

conjunctions' (*D*, 262-4, n. 62)?[60] Derrida also refers to Mallarmé's sonnet '*A la nue accablante tu*' (1894) to 'underline a number of letters, reserving the *A*'s and the *Tu*'s' but also 'counting the A's, as white as foam' since that particular letter becomes laterally associated with 'SPERM, the burning lava, milk, spume, froth, or dribble of the seminal liquor' in a metaphor for the very disseminative movement of the text, which 'skims and froths the flight and theft of the seminal' (*D*, 266-7). Derrida invokes *Igitur* again, 'in which the anagrammatical calculus of forms ending in -URE (*pliure* (fold), *dechirure* (rear), *reliure* (binding) is even more condensed than elsewhere', and wonders whether this is 'an anagrammatical hallucination, delirium, folly (*folie*), an anagram of phial (*fiole*) […]' (*D*, 275-6, n. 73).[61]

Similar effects are discerned in Philippe Sollers's *Nombres* (1968). Derrida refers to Sollers's dedication, which 'presents itself as a proper name' and 'whose vowels compose an ideogrammatic formula which *Numbers* will in several senses decompose and recompose, impressing a kind of constant undulation upon it, by expropriation and anagrammatical reappropriation […]'. He asserts that 'these writing-effects, which will henceforth be called *paragrammatical effects*, are much more numerous than these examples might lead one to believe' (*D*, 338-9; my emphasis). The understanding of paragrammatism is reinforced when Derrida turns his attention to Jean Genet:

> Genet would then rejoin this powerful, occulted tradition that was long preparing its coup […] while hiding its work from itself, anagrammatizing proper names, anamorphosing signatures and all that follows. Genet, by one of those movements in (n)*ana*, would have, knowing it or not […] silently, laboriously, minutely, obsessionally, compulsively, and with the moves of a thief in the night, set his signatures in (the) place of all the missing objects. In the morning, expecting to recognize familiar things, you find his name all over the place, in big letters, small letters, as a whole or in morsels deformed or recomposed. […] He has affected everything with his signature.[62]
>
> […] Genet anagrammatizes his own proper(ty), sows more than any other, and gleans his name over whatever it falls (*tombe*). (*G*, 46b)

What these examples indicate is that Derrida has an ear finely attuned to other writers' anagrammatic echoing of syllables and proper names. It would be interesting to compare the mechanics of this echoing with that of the compositional principle which Saussure thought fundamental to ancient poetry: almost as interesting indeed, as asking why Derrida's ear appears to have been deaf to analogous reverberations in Saussure's notebooks. This is an issue which is broached later, but attention must first shift to indicating how another catalogue of such devices, Derrida's own, helps to dispel

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[60] Cf. the references to Mallarmé's poetry in another context which refers to Saussure's anagrams: Kristeva, 'L'engendrement de la formule', *Tel Quel* 37 (1969): 34-73, and 38 (1969): 55-81.

[61] The significance of these references is, again, enhanced by the knowledge that Kristeva's 'L'engendrement de la formule' had also analysed Sollers's novel in a context implicating Saussure's anagrams.

[62] Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, trans. John P. Leavey, Jr., and Richard Rand (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1986 [orig. 1974]), 41b-42b; hereafter *G* with page references in the text. It is worth noting how this passage, in its reference to 'one of those movements in *ana*', prefigures Lyotardian reflections on postmodernism as a procedure in *ana*. Also noteworthy is the mention of anamorphosis, again, in a context discussing anagrammatism: the correspondences between the two practices as discussed by Rey are relevant here.

lingering doubts over the tenability of correspondences between Derrida's disseminative textuality and Saussure's anagrams.[63]

Perhaps the most extraordinary example of this lies in the non-vocalizable *gl* cluster in *Glas*. Its trajectory through a repertoire of motley associations, from 'a voiceless voice stifling a sob' to 'the tickled laughter or the glairy vomit of a baby glutton', from the 'pissing cold name of an impassive Teutonic philosopher' to 'the clitoral glue' or 'gasp of sperm' (*G*, 119b), appears as gratuitous as it seems indecorous in academic writing – until it transpires that 'all the proliferating wounds, bites (*morsures*), breaks, sutures, borders and grafts that gl took advantage of' have modulated an anasemic and antisemantic performance which dramatizes that 'gl tears the "body," "sex," "voice," and "writing" from the logic of consciousness and representation' (*G*, 234b-5b). It all has to do, then, with the 'illogical', for what is being staked in *Glas*, through performative inscription of the counter-logical, or of a different kind of logic, are the conditions of possibility for the encryption of anasemic cognition. This is reflected in how the *gl* cluster is reintegrated into the eponymous *glas*, in a reconstitutive movement which enhances the text's associative potentiality through the polysemic qualities contributed by the other letters, *s* and *a*, which also come together as signifiers respectively of absolute knowledge (*SA* as the initials of *savoir absolu*) and of the id (*SA* as a homophone for *ça*, French for 'the id'), thereby keying their own anasemic extensions. It could therefore be said that *glas* experiences, through dispersal of the clusters *gl*, *a*, *s*, and *SA/ça*, the diffractedness of one of Saussure's hypograms, while coding a much more complex network of denotations and connotations than was ever the case in the notebooks.[64]

Additionally, it is not difficult to find in Derrida instances of the dispersal of the elements of proper names, including his own. In *The Post Card*, for instance, the phonic qualities of the disseminated fragments of *déjà* and *derrière* suggest a signature effect: '*de*rrida *ja*cques' and '*derri*(*ère*)-*da*'.[65] Similarly, in *Glas*, Derrida himself notes 'all the rhetorical flowers in which I disperse my signature, in which I apostrophize or apotropize myself' (*G*, 84bi). The anagram in its disseminative mode may be perceived as one of these 'rhetorical flowers'.[66]

There is one other striking instance of anagrammatic play in Derrida which recalls Saussure's notebooks, and which is pointed out by Ulmer:

> [Derrida's] paper on Ponge has nothing to do with Ponge as person or as poet, but only with 'Ponge' as name – the name 'Ponge' serves as the generative rule of the piece: […]. His approach, resembling Saussure's anagrammatic and hypogrammatic studies seeking the names of gods or heroes that provide the rule for Latin poems, is to reveal the dissemination of Ponge's name in the images of his texts, […]. 'Ponge,' thus, becomes (among other things) '*éponge*' (sponge and turkish towel), '*éponger*' (to clean with a

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[63] It should be noted that an audit which tried to tick off the characteristics of such a textuality against that hypothesized in Saussure's notebooks would be both pedantic and unimaginative. At issue, then, is a prefiguring rather than analogic relation.

[64] See the references to *SA* in Leavey, *Glassary*, *passim* (especially in the '+s/∧' section, 21-129), as well as Derrida's description of '[t]he "disseminating" power of the "s"' (*D*, 322) and his reference to the *a* of differance in 'Différance', 3.

[65] Alan Bass, 'Translator's Introduction: L Before K', in Jacques Derrida, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans., with an introduction and additional notes, by Alan Bass (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987 [orig. 1980]), xix.

[66] See John P. Leavey, Jr., 'This (then) will not have been a book', in *Glassary*, 116 ff. for further remarks on Derrida's encrypted signatures.

sponge), and *ponce* (pumice). […] Derrida demonstrates that these items or actions do appear in the poetry, turning chance into necessity and manifesting the dissemination of the name in the images of the text.[67]

Ulmer's reference to the notebooks is important, marking them as a point of reference for Derrida's disseminative strategies. Barbara Johnson's reference to the '[a]nagrammatical texture' in *Dissemination* is also relevant: 'Derived from Saussure's discovery of the anagrammatical dispersal of certain proper names in Latin poetry, this expression designates the systematic insistence of the word *pharmakon* and its relatives in Plato's [*Phaedrus*].' (*D*, xxv; Translator's Introduction) Yet perhaps the best case for regarding Saussure's anagrams as precursors of strategies in Derrida's texts is made by Derrida himself. Derrida acknowledges the notebooks' relevance to the way in which 'these three "eras" of the repetition of Platonism' (i.e. Plato's, Rousseau's, and Saussure's), which promote 'the exclusion and devaluation of writing', must come to terms with 'the construction of a "literary" work':

> Before Saussure's *Anagrams*, there were Rousseau's; and Plato's work, outside and independent of its logocentric 'content', which is then only one of its inscribed functions, can be read in its anagrammatical texture. (*D*, 158)

Consequently, Saussure's notebooks and 'anagrammatical texture' are presented as contrary to the logocentric denigration of writing, and, by extension, as potentially sympathetic to the deconstructive manoeuvres directed at the *Course*. Remarkably, the 'anagrammatical' has become a paradigm of the deconstructive. Perhaps the best indication of this is the passage below, where *anagrammatic* and *anagram* are used interchangeably with the sense of *punceptual* in relation to 'Plato's anagrammatic writing', as Derrida terms it:

> When a word inscribes itself as the citation of another sense of the same word, when the textual center-stage of the word *pharmakon*, even while it means *remedy*, cites, re-cites, and makes legible that which *in the same word* signifies, in another spot and on a different level of the stage, *poison*, […], the choice of only one of these renditions by the translator has as its first effect the neutralization of the citational play, of the 'anagram,' and, in the end, quite simply of the very textuality of the translated text. (*D*, 98)

Once such correspondences are established, it is tempting to regard Saussure as having anticipated not only structuralist linguistics through the *Course* but also, through the notebooks, scriptural effects which in their 'anagrammatical texture' underpin Derrida's styles. If Saussure's anagrams are, by Derrida's own admission, potentially so significant for his own concerns, why are they not favoured with more than passing mentions in texts like *Glas* or *Dissemination*? Why, if Rousseau's and Plato's 'anagrammatical texture' is addressed by Derrida, is Saussure's largely ignored? What the next section attempts to do is to examine how the downplaying of Saussure's anagrams in *Of Grammatology* was, fascinatingly, replicated in *Glas*, and to discover what may have motivated this tactic of (dis)engagement.

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[67] Ulmer, *Applied Grammatology*, 20. See also Derrida's remarks in *Signéponge/Signsponge*, trans. Richard Rand (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 64, on 'The *rebus* signature, the metonymic or anagrammatic signature […]' and how this leads to reflections on Ponge's motivation of the proper name, and Rand's introduction and its references to 'infinite anagrams and labyrinthine homonyms'.

Saussure's Anagram Notebooks and Derrida's *Glas*

Ulmer asserts that 'the theoretical center of *Glas* is its discussion of onomatopoeia in Saussure'.[68] The relevant passage from the *Course* is reproduced in *Glas* as a precedent to its deconstruction:

> *Onomatopoeias* might be used to prove that the choice of the signifier is not always arbitrary. But they are never organic elements of a linguistic system. Besides, their number is much smaller than is generally supposed. Words like French *fouet* 'whip' or *glas* 'knell' may strike certain ears with suggestive sonority, but to see that they have not always had this character we need only go back to their Latin forms […]. The quality of their present sounds, or rather the quality that is attributed to them, is a fortuitous result of phonetic evolution. (*G*, 91b)

This fortuitousness, coupled with the fact that even 'authentic onomatopoeias […] are only approximate and already more or less conventional imitations of certain noises', allows Saussure to conclude that 'once these words have been introduced into the language (*langue*), they are to a certain extent drawn into the same evolution – phonetic, morphological, etc. – that other words undergo […]', providing 'obvious proof that they lose something of their original character in order to assume that of the linguistic sign in general, which is unmotivated' (quoted in *G*, 92b).

    This plays into the hands of Derrida's deconstruction:

> [T]he examples are chosen too poorly or too well: no one can consider *fouet* and *glas* as authentic onomatopoeias. […] besides, there is no authentic onomatopoeia. But instead of concluding that there is then no authentically arbitrary element either, instead of taking an interest in the *contaminated* effects of onomatopoeia or of arbitrariness, in the drawing-along of the language [*langue*] (with the *fouet* or *glas*, [Saussure] runs ahead of the 'danger' in order to save the thesis of the sign's arbitrariness. (*G*, 93b)

There follows an assault on the notion of a pure arbitrariness. Pure arbitrariness would denature language, imparting to it an algebraic quality which is unrecognizable: 'What will remain of the internal system of the language (*langue*), of the "organic elements of a linguistic system", when it will have been purified, stripped of all those qualities, of those attributions, of that evolution?' (*G*, 94b) The sign, indeed, may be always already contaminated:

> And what if […] language's internal system did not exist, or that it is never used, or at least that it is used only by contaminating it, and that this contamination is inevitable, hence regular and 'normal', makes up a part of the system and its functioning […]. (*G*, 94b)

    Indeed, if the styles of *Glas* are to clear a space for themselves, they must undermine the dogma which prohibits that clearance: the Saussurean-sponsored idea on the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. Accordingly, before embarking on his deconstruction of Saussure's thoughts about authentic onomatopoeias, Derrida lexicographically inventories associations clustering around the word *glas* to supply performative proof that contamination is always already in place (*G*, 86b-90b). The move is particularly suggestive because of the chance which had Saussure choose the word *glas* as the exemplary onomatopoeia, a seemingly arbitrary choice which Derrida,

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[68] Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 111a.

in a demonstrative gesture which renders that chance oddly fated, invests with uneasy awareness of the destiny of its eventual deconstruction.

Why, however, has it been said that it might have been self-defeating for Derrida to mention Saussure's notebooks? *Of Grammatology*'s downplaying of Saussure's notebooks indicates an anxiety concerning filiation, a move necessary in order for Derrida's deconstruction in the *Course* not to be undermined by those resurrected texts. For *Glas* to judiciously ignore the notebooks would have been more problematic. *Glas* postdates *Of Grammatology*, and the plea concerning publication histories which proved effective in the prior text is unavailable to it. This, therefore, is the alternative:

> [E]lsewhere, Saussure himself took into account the 'relative motivation' of the sign. He distrusts everything that the reduction of language (*langage*) to '*nomenclature*' could imply […]. He has even attempted, in the *Anagrams*, a 'remotivating' reading for which he has barely been pardoned, a kind of daydream, certainly knowledgeable and of a superior degree, but within the current frames of the scientific institution, essentially nuts, *dingue*. (*G*, 95b)

This is, arguably, a token gesture. Nevertheless, there are certain intriguing factors that draw attention to themselves. The first is that the above quotation works in ways reminiscent of Lotringer's or Baudrillard's analyses. Those analyses suggest that Saussure was unable to appreciate, or only intuited, the importance of what he had hit upon, and in any case defused the explosive implications by explaining them away in a manner consistent with the general linguistics outlined in his lectures. Once this point is made – and at around the time *Glas* was being prepared for publication it was being made extensively – the degree of attention (or neglect) *Glas* accords to the notebooks acquires a new dimension. It is not really a question, if it ever was, of piqued and strategic neglect of Saussure's anagrams.

Indeed, the vital point to grasp is surely that Derrida, though he may neglect the procedures hypothesized in Saussure's notebooks in one sense, adopts them in another. He does so not at source – nowhere in Derrida is there a sustained analysis of the notebooks – but at one remove, in the shape, as seen above, of acknowledgements of analogous strategies in Mallarmé, Genet, Sollers, and Ponge, and, more importantly, through his own adaptation of those procedures. In truth, perhaps little that might have been speculated in *Glas* about Saussure's notebooks could have exceeded what was already being done by this time of the anagrams' reception. But much could be done in *Glas* that was not being done elsewhere, and that was *to enact what the notebooks hypothesized* and, thereby, adapt the 'scandalous antisemantics' whose potential Derrida discerned in Abraham and Torok's work. This, too, could explain why it was Mallarmé's, Genet's, Sollers's and Ponge's strategies which were privileged rather than those of the putative anagrammatists behind ancient Latin and Vedic poetry. Mallarmé, Genet, Sollers, and Ponge *encoded* in *literary* writing an anagrammatical calculus which is more liminal than that which Saussure *decoded* only diffidently in *private* writing. To that extent, it is fitting that it is they who are invoked rather than Saussure.

This leaves one pending issue. What is implicated in Derrida's suggestion, in the quotation above, that Saussure's notebooks suggest that their author was 'nuts, *dingue*'? It should be recalled that Saussure himself came to doubt his own project, and that critics like Michel Pierssens and Jean-Jacques Lecercle have explored the anagrams in contexts which align them with the productions of *fous littéraires* studied by André Blavier. On this point, a pertinent and discreet approach would be to take note of the

relevant passages in the magisterial critical biography of Saussure published by John E. Joseph and in the punningly-titled collection – appropriate, not least in view of the anagrams and what they did with letters and syllabic clusters – of Saussure's correspondence, edited by Claudia Mejía Quijano and called *Une vie en lettres*.

Meanwhile, a work like *Glas* which founds itself in procedures which recall such productions, as well as the operations of anasemia, will scarcely appear to have selected auspicious models for a cognition alternative to that which has been hegemonic in Western metaphysics. Steinmetz's fears regarding the 'interpretative deliria' which might be occasioned by Derrida's styles do not seem unfounded.[69] Derrida acknowledges the risks himself: 'But isn't remotivation, naïve or subtle, always a bit crazy (*dingue*)?' (*G*, 96b) Why, therefore, does Derrida borrow from the punceptual and anagrammatic (anti-)discourse of remotivation?

The reason centres on a blurring of the divide between the rational and the irrational, between demotivation and the remotivation of signs and the structure of language; yet 'the simple alternative of two opposite forces (motivation/nonmotivation) within a homogeneous field cannot account for the internal and displaced division of each force: re-motivation is also apotropaic' (*G*, 97b). Accordingly, *Glas* integrates opposite forces, showing that motivation *can* be thetic, and that thesis can be achieved through motivation. This it does through techniques involving 'a pure play of traces or supplements', which is acknowledged by Derrida as possibly '"mad" since it can go on infinitely in the element of the linguistic permutation of substitutes, of substitutes for substitutes' (*D*, 89). But that madness is foundational, as *Dissemination* points out in its references to Thoth, the 'god of calculation, arithmetic, and rational science' who is also 'the god of magic formulas that calm the sea, of secret accounts, of hidden texts: an archetype of Hermes, god of cryptography no less than of every other -graphy' (*D*, 93). Always already, therefore, there has been a decrypting madness which has watched over thinking,[70] so that what is *dingue* is not necessarily dismissible as demented.

One could go on with various explorations of this (ir)rationality in *Glas*, but it is more urgent to inquire here into the anagram's involvement in it. As occurred with the pun, the anagram's very historical marginalization recommends its penetration of *Glas*. The difficulty is that of deciding whether the anagram can still be called so after being overlaid with associations which seem to denature it. Derrida uses 'anagrammatical texture' to describe techniques which Ulmer would probably have called punceptual, while the term is also extended to cover the dispersal and recurrence of key letters or syllabic clusters along the surface of a text. Is this writing truly anagrammatical, or is it so only by virtue of a redefinition? Certainly, Jan Baetens's worries that avant-garde literature had brought about an overgeneralization of the anagram appear even more relevant to Derrida's texts. The anagram, it appears, has undergone *and* abetted that process of redefinition and 'designification' which Abraham describes as having subverted 'the twists and turns (*tropoi*) of customary speech and writing'.[71] This leads to an impasse. Those like Ulmer who are sympathetic to anasemic discourse and do not balk at the thought of 'doing philosophy in the manner of Raymond Roussel' will countenance the anagram's renewal.[72] Those hostile to such discourse will, like

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[69] Steinmetz, 43 ff.
[70] See Jacques Derrida, 'A "Madness" Must Watch Over Thinking', in *Points...: Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber, trans. Peggy Kamuf & others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 339-64.
[71] Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 35b.
[72] Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 35b.

Baetens, find the anagram's redefinition disturbing. This concern is vital, because it will return to govern perceptions of what should be covered by the term *anagrammatology*, towards which it is finally opportune to move on.

Conclusion: Toward Anagrammatology

Predictably, the Lyotardian elaboration of the *post-* prefix in terms of 'a procedure in "*ana-*"' looms relevantly. Particularly, the recourse to the future perfect to capture the temporal relation determining the recognition after the event, *après coup*, of a (re)elaboration which takes place through anamnesia, re-dress-ing an 'initial forgetting' and restoring what had gone on before, in the *avant-coup*. This serves an understanding of the anagrammatological, especially in view of Ulmer's references to the possibility of a 'postcriticism' opened up by *Glas*.

The other parsed elements of *anagrammatology* are indicative too: *anagram* arrives here trailing further relevant associations from the *cahiers* that are variously linked to metatheses, onomastics, and dissemination. *Gram* recalls the various meanings of *letter* which have traversed this article: most simply, as *grammata*, letters, transposed in anagrammatism; more complicatedly, as the power of the letter as inscription, referred to in various poststructuralist contexts which discuss Saussure's notebooks; additionally, as the *stokheion*, or letter-atom, in Lucretius, and the reworking of this motif in in Neoplatonic constructions and combinatoric play stretching from Renaissance to postmodern literature;[73] finally, as the grammatolatry ('The worship of letters; adherence to the letter (of Scripture)' – *OED*) of cabbalists. A primigenial anagram: recalling the discussion of *arche-writing* in *Of Grammatology,* the possibility of an originary writing, *avant la lettre*. Grammatology, however, also looks forward, utopically, to the possibility of the foundation of a 'science of writing', marked by *ology*, the left-over letters *t* and *o* in *anagrammatology* then cuing the *toward* dynamic, a promise of an *à venir* coexisting with anamnesic *après-coup*.

How, then, to proceed according to the ana-grammatolog-ical, the *anagram*matological, as if that were possible within some limits? Are Saussure's notebooks anagrammatological in the radical sense of being at the root of techniques Derrida took further? Are the precursors of Derrida's thought and writing in ways suggested by the *ana-* prefix, indicating a movement or procedure 'up, in place or time, back, again, anew' (*OED*)? Do Derrida's anagrammatic techniques modulate themselves through patterns of (re)inscription akin to procedures hypothesized in Saussure's notebooks, to which Derrida's styles go 'back', to cast the notebooks in the role of an ana-grammatology?

Since *grammatology* follows the prefix, its meanings are relevant to any answer. Grammatology is a 'science of science which would no longer have the form of *logic*

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[73] See *La Carte postale: de Socrate à Freud et au-delà* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980), 517, for a reference to 'l'atomystique de la lettre', a phrase omitted from the English translation. The phrase occurs in the context of Derrida's observation that '[t]he divisibility of the letter is also the divisibility of the signifier to which it gives rise […]' (*The Post Card*, 489). That divisibility reinscribes the dilemma faced by Saussure. It can be deliberately scripted by the author, but it can also be the effect of chance, of language's capacity to '*simultaneously* incline towards increasing the reserves of random indetermination *as well as* the capacity for coding and overcoding' – Jacques Derrida, 'My Chances/*Mes Chances*: A Rendezvous with Some European Stereophonies', trans. Irene Harvey and Avital Ronell, in *Taking Chances: Derrida, Psychoanalysis, and Literature*, ed. Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 2.

but that of *grammatics*', and institutes a 'history of the possibility of history which would no longer be an archaeology, a philosophy of history or a history of philosophy' (*OG*, 27-8). It would be futile to assert that this is envisaged in Saussure's notebooks or that had Saussure's notebooks never been recovered Derrida's styles would have been any different. Yet if Saussure's notebooks can plausibly be advanced as precursors of Derrida's work, it is because they anticipate the possibility of a style in which key words, letters, or syllables are dispersed, anagrammatically or integrally, across a text. Enough has been said in this chapter about Derrida's attention to analogues of such a style in Mallarmé, Genet and Sollers, and about his own use of similar techniques in *Glas*, to indicate that the comparison is viable. To the extent that Saussure's anagrams are marked by this foreshadowing of the 'anagrammatical texture' in Derrida's styles, and to the degree that considerations relating to 'grammatics' and the 'history of the possibility of history' are woven into that texture (and this can be said to be the case, since the Derridean texts which mention and replicate the techniques of Saussure's anagrams – *Of Grammatolology*, *Dissemination*, and *Glas* – are predicated on a contemplation of the conditions of possibility for writing philosophy, literature, history), the notebooks may be perceived as ana-grammatological.

This would be a legitimate and safe conclusion, but it would also be a tamely reassuring one. It recalls Niels Helsloot's use of *anagrammar* as 'the guiding science of the (near) future', to which 'dazzling self-evidences of grammar at once become problematic'.[74] Unfortunately, Helsloot's study breaks off just at the point where the nature of *anagrammar* might have started to be considered more closely. Derrida's writing is one which dramatizes the cognitive power of style, and one of the results of that discourse is to have made the anagrammatic, defined in its broadest sense, suasive. The anagrammatic styles mediated cannot be tamed by being classed as literary, and remain unsettling by dint of the very undecidability over what they *are*. So, is *anagrammatology* the best term by which to describe what is envisaged in Derrida's styles?

Another coinage of Derrida's, *pragrammatology*, which refers to 'the intersection of a pragmatics and a grammatology' and covers the relation between 'inscriptions of proper names', 'the effects of contextual circumscription', and 'the problematics of randomness', might be more appropriate.[75] In the end, perhaps *anagrammatology* is just one other neologism resulting from efforts to engage with Derrida's styles. Others could include Claudette Sartiliot's *epigrammatology*,[76] and Ulmer's *puncept* and *dis-faire-ance*.[77] When these neologisms are viewed in tandem with those in discussions of Saussure's anagram notebooks – Niels Helsloot's *anagrammar*, for instance, or Léon Robel's interesting *anaparahypogrammes*[78] – it becomes evident that they represent attempts to come to terms with the way in which Derrida's texts challenge orthodox modalities of philosophical exposition: attempts which may find, in Saussure's

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[74] Niels Helsloot, 'Anagrammar: In Defense of Ferdinand de Saussure's Philology', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* 5 (1995): 247.

[75] Derrida, 'My Chances/*Mes Chances*', 27-8.

[76] See Claudette Sartiliot, *Citation and Modernity: Derrida, Joyce and Brecht* (Norman, OK and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 36. Sartiliot links the term to remarks on epigrammatic effects in Derrida in Geoffrey Hartman, *Saving the Text: Literature/Derrida/Philosophy* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 4.

[77] On *dis-faire-ance*, see Ulmer, 'Sounding the Unconscious', in Leavey, *Glassary*, 29b.

[78] Léon Robel, 'Une lecture des poètes', *Change* 6 (1970): 82.

notebooks, unlikely and inchoate pre-texts for much that finds its apotheosis in that challenge.

There is, however, one factor about *anagrammatology* which marks it out from the other neologisms. Parsing the word as *ana-grammatology* foregrounds the relevance of the future perfect. This is because the operations of the *ana-* effects of anamnesis and anagnorisis enter into a highlighted relation with a truth about *grammatology* which is best conveyed by Derrida's admission that

> [E]ven if, given the most favorable hypothesis, [grammatology] did overcome all technical and epistemological obstacles as well as all the theological and metaphysical impediments that have limited it hitherto, such a science of writing runs the risk of never being established as such and with that name. Of never being able to define the unity of its project or its object. Of not being able either to write its discourse on method or to describe the limits of its field. […].

There is a possibility then, perhaps even the certainty, that grammatology will never have been; that, if it will be, it will be recognized as such, necessarily, only after it has been: *après coup*, according to the temporality of the future perfect. As Derrida puts it, '[f]or that future world and for that within it which will have put into question the values of sign, word, and writing, for that which guides our future anterior, there is as yet no exergue.' (*OG*, 4-5) In the same way that grammatology would inscribe itself in the wake of the deconstruction of Saussure's sign as it is described in the *Course*, what are the chances of 'an academic writing', 'a postcriticism', or an anagrammatology mediating itself through techniques which adapt and exceed the questioning of 'the values of sign, word, and writing' initiated in the *avant-coup* of Saussure's anagram notebooks? Does not the 'new academic writing' of a promised 'postcriticism' know in advance, like Derrida's grammatology, the impossibility of its own (re)configuration? Is not the prospect of anagrammatology, then, an abstraction haunted by its own almost certain immateriality?

Indeed, once the theme of a writing to come is broached, the obligatory intertextual references will allude to a text in which the letter will never have achieved materiality: Mallarmé's unscripted, unscriptable Book, which proved determining for a tradition of critical engagement with the conditions of (im)possibility for a radically transformed writing, messianically awaited. The tradition, to cite only two examples, takes in Maurice Blanchot's *Le livre à venir* (1959) and Derrida's statements on the book 'I will not write, but that guides, attracts, seduces everything I read'.[79] *Glas* features interestingly as an example of a writing compensating for that which can never quite come to configuration. A site of the anagrammatological, perhaps the only one we have and one we never knew we had, it arrives arguably in the moment of an *après coup*, a moment of anagnorisis that offers here a way to conclusion. To tamper, therefore, with a stirring line of Derrida, '*Il y a, là,* Glas' ('There is *Glas* there'), or, more fittingly in view of the agency of the future perfect, '*Il y aura eu, là,* Glas' ('There will have been *Glas* there').[80]

And yet, to paraphrase a more common saying, '*Plus ça s'anagrammatise, plus c'est la même chose*'. Anagrammatism is not in itself disjunctive enough to displace the prevailing order of discourse. Hearable in *ça* is not only the customary psychoanalytic

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[79] Jacques Derrida, 'Dialanguages', in *Points…*, 147.
[80] The original line reads '*il y a, là, cendre*' ('there are cinders there') – Jacques Derrida, *Cinders*, ed., trans., and intr. Ned Lukacher (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), *passim*.

reference in French to the *id*, but *SA*, *savoir absolu*, the absolute knowledge which *Glas* plays on and against, and which in the context of the sentence would suggest that, again, absolute knowledge can always reintegrate itself even after the anagrammatological operation, thereby remaining anallagmatic. Saussure's anagrams, whose initials are also found in this *SA*, will perhaps therefore never displace the *Course* and become anatreptic.

How, then, to conclude? Possibly by recalling Michel Dupuis: 'Exceeding Saussure is all very well! But which Saussure?'[81] Saussure is always going to be more than *deux*, particularly in this moment of critique when archive fevers over his legacy have subsided and the temperate work of revaluation proceeds solidly in commentators who, though they come from diverse areas – Normand, Arrivé, Rastier, Utaker, Sanders, Testenoire, Joseph, Meija – have made his plurality readable rather than threatening to scholarship.[82] That, doubtless, is good. Less fortifying, perhaps, is to see that the heady days of New French Theory are not quite replicable in the present. Derrida himself, it could be said, lived out – wrote out? – the anagrammatological affinities, which even if one does not accept the common (and misleading) perception of a shift to more overtly political overtones in the later work cannot be said to be as present in most of the later books. However, to take a cue from what Laurent Milesi indicates in his introduction to this issue of *Word and Text*, and from what Sorelle Henricus further argues in these pages, what can be countenanced is the thought that what opened up in the evolving understanding of *écriture* within the New French Theory and in the modes of knowledge production in our time – including, I would add, within the new processes of electronic inscription and within Code Studies that the contemporary Digital Humanities address – is further scope for what might be thought of as anagrammatological. And whatever might be thought of that point, it remains true that the age of New French Theory *and* our present times find in Saussure's *cahiers d'anagrammes* a fine example of how there is no microhistory – in literary and critical studies as well – onto which macrohistorical considerations cannot intrude. The only issue that remains undetermined is which is the microhistory, and which the macrohistory.

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[81] Michel Dupuis, 'À propos des anagrammes saussuriennes', *Cahiers d'analyse textuelle* 19 (1977): 9.
[82] See Russell Daylight, *What If Derrida Was Wrong about Saussure?* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), for an example of a powerful rereading of Derrida's work on Saussure that does not factor in the anagrams or other aspects of the work not related to the *Course*.

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Anagramatologia.
Derrida înaintea *caietelor de anagrame* ale lui Saussure

Rezumat

Acest articol reia lectura lui Derrida asupra lui Ferdinand de Saussure din *Gramatologia* și se concentrează asupra *caietelor de anagrame* ale lui Saussure care au implicat o lucrare speculativă asupra principiilor ascunse ale creației poetice din antichitate, o ipoteză pe care Saussure a urmat-o timp de mai mulți ani (1905-1909) printr-o cercetare adâncă ce a rămas însă nepublicată și încă incertă. Articolul susține faptul că referințele precaute ale lui Derrida asupra anagramelor lui Saussure sunt mai semnificative decât ar părea inițial. Ideile critice și strategiile de scriere pe care acestea le deschid în opera lui Derrida ar putea fi gândite în termeni ce nu se leagă atât de mult de gramatologie, ci mai degrabă de *anagramatologie*. Prin urmare, jocul anagramatismului din modul de compoziție derridian și argumentarea acestuia devine centrul acestui articol, în mod particular în relație cu *Glas*. Concluzia este că modelele care îl influențează pe Derrida când acesta se plasează înaintea caietelor de anagrame sugerează că *anagramatologia* sunt de un grad de complexitate mai ridicat decât simplul spirit pe care acestea îl transmit.