The Metaphysics of Relationality: Language, Literature, and the Problem of "Social Inclusion"

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> For the task of the *revaluation of all values* more capacities may have been needed than have ever dwelt together in a single individual— above all, even contrary capacities that had to be kept from disturbing, destroying one another. An order of rank among these capacities; the art of separating without setting against one another; to mix nothing, to 'reconcile' nothing; a tremendous variety that is nevertheless the opposite of chaos (Nietzsche, 1969: 254)

> Without a set of silent assumptions about human being, human nature, the human condition – without what Saussure calls a point of view – observations of language would be empty, data would fail to cohere into a meaningful pattern, and researchers in the human sciences would not know what their instances were instances of (Harpham, 2002: 44-5).

Introduction

Inclusion, we must suppose, is a good thing, probably a moral good, because it proposes, or seeks, to ground, a kind of symmetry, or a symmetrical relationship between two things or two groups of things, entities, or subjects. The cultural concept of inclusion also implies a relational rejection of *in-wardness*, a repudiation of difference, differential networks, and fissures, divisions, and, very likely, differentiation of any kind. Thus to *in-clude* is to create a field of effects closed off from separateness, separation, or warring-ness. Political inclusion, for example, promises a democratic integration of all contending forces or views into a consensus of sorts, a coming together of irreconcilable needs and conflictual instincts, tendencies, and a-drift-ness of any kind. In sum, then, inclusion or inclusiveness seeks or tends to "totalise", unify, solidify, dampen, streamline, and possibly encompass and thus, on the whole, evokes a striking image of "concreting" a disparate space (or a concreteness within the conceptual field of difference). Thus to include is to create a space in which inclusive properties magnetise all kinds of hitherto independent entities and things which fall into the space of the inclusive, to create a realm in which all that is solid or concrete evaporates into non-identity. Inclusion, then, collectivises, amalgamates, and "draws in" all hitherto independent things or entities or realms or identities.

But what happens when inclusion is hitched to the wagon of the social, or rather, what could we possibly have when inclusion is modified by the adjective "social"? The social is that which belongs to society, or which relates to society (or the principle of sociality). The social is also that which is not the individual, and encompasses a collection of individuals. The social is structured by complex rules and conventions of speech, writing, behaviour, action, and a host of more or less mutually shared activities, conceptions, and ideations. The social also implies *compulsion* (convention is just the flip side of compulsion, and compulsion implies the

presence, real or putative, of a central or a given authority, whether in the force of expectation or custom). Marx writes in the *Grundrisse* (1857) and the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (1844) that human beings cannot be conceived outside society or the social in itself, namely language, linguistic, graphic, or pictorial representations of the Real, cultural and material productions, and economic and cultural cooperation.

With the onset of modernity, or the modern world, reciprocity as traditionally understood began to recede, and mutual recognition began to be a problem because of the increasing atomisation of the individual and the fragmentation of social life. Sigmund Freud, for example, has questioned the autonomy of the self or its unity as a self-sufficient entity by showing that "the ego is not even a master in its own house but must content itself with scanty information of what is going on in its mind" (Freud, 1971: 284-5). Freud's discovery of the unconscious shows that the human subject is at the mercy of desire and other libidinal forces (see, on this, Thurschwell, 2000; Willheim, 1975). Previously, Hegel had written, in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1979), about the independence and dependence of self-consciousness in the struggle for recognition; and along with the problematic of "reciprocity" and "mutual recognition" arose the question of *differentiation* and *difference*. Within modernity, differentiation and difference led to the creation of many different kinds of validity claims; and different speech acts and heterogeneity standards that, argues Pippin, "cannot be subsumed under a common standard" (Pippin, 1997: 175).

Social Inclusion

The term "social inclusion" means, or implies, the possibility or the actual presence of an organic integration or the reconciliation of Reason with Social Structure, itself treated or conceptualised by many linguists (as we will see below) as a kind of "macro-subject" that recognises itself in nature and consciousness. Thus conceptualised as a theoretic field of effects, inclusion as such is a space of inclusiveness that is aware of, or that strikes a relationship with, "the social" (relatedness within people, society, social relations), the "performative" acts of language, the linguistics of speech and writing, the production of art, the creation of the conditions of possibility for what Nietzsche calls "horizon"; that human beings need horizons and a sense of unconditional beliefs for them to be healthy, strong and productive within a certain horizon. Hence Nietzsche argues that for humans to be capable of drawing a horizon around themselves, and thus be capable of losing themselves in another's, they would need conditions that would promote cheerfulness, a good conscience, belief in the future, and the joyful deed.

Yet according to Nietzsche, what we call the social (another name for inclusion) is also potentially dangerous because it may or might diminish Difference— that special quality of experience which escapes totalitarian control or easy capture by forces of authority and enforced convention. Difference (change, alteration, variance, transformation, metamorphosis, fluidity, etc.) has to, and must escape, the grip of the social as such:

> This is a universal law: a living thing can only be healthy, striving and productive within a certain horizon. If it is incapable of drawing one round itself, or too selfish to lose its own in another's, it will come to an untimely end. Cheerfulness, a good

> conscience, belief in the future, the joyful deed— all depends, in the individual as well as the nation, on there being a line that divides the visible and clear from the vulgar and the shadowy (Nietzsche, 1997: 63).

But is cheerfulness, a good conscience, and a joyful deed compatible with the social in the form of conventions, rules, enforced behaviour, and institutional grids? But note that Nietzsche in the quoted passage links the creation of an "horizon" to the "nation", the more or less perfect embodiment of the social (for modern societies are embedded in a nation of sorts). However, what is this "line that divides the vulgar and the clear from the shadowy"? One interpretation is that this line is Language, that method or system that enables humans to relate to one another, that which "the members of a particular society speak" (Wardhaugh, 2010: 1), and which may consist of sets of sound and written symbols deployed for the purposes of speech (talking) and writing; a system of communication which consists of grammar and vocabulary (Devitt & Sterelny, 1999: 14). Now this takes us to the wider issue of language and its relationship with "social structure".

Language and Social Inclusion

Whatever the linguists (might) say about language, that it is a system of communication, that it is characterised by cultural and historical diversity, that it is infinitely more complex than is usually assumed, the fact is that language and social convention go hand in hand (rules and principles). On this view, language brings together a community of speakers; or rather a community of speakers creates a specific linguistic community or a *pluri-lingual* community where speakers nonetheless use a language of sorts. Noam Chomsky has made the distinction between competence (what speakers know about their language) and performance (what speakers do with their language). This distinction deserves to be quoted in full:

> Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as merely limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance… to study actual linguistic performance, we must consider the interaction of a variety of factors, of which the underlying competence of the speaker-hearer is only one. In this respect, study of language is no different from empirical investigation of other complex phenomena (Chomsky, 1965: 3-4).

Many linguists have followed Chomsky in making a distinction between language as a mental system and language as an extra-mental system (part of the outside world). Lightfoot makes a distinction in this regard, with the former as I-language and the latter as E-language (Lightfoot, 2006: 12). And like Chomsky, he introduces a dualistic or binary system in the study of language. Wardhaugh (2010) reports Pinker (2007) and a host of other linguists who hold the dualistic understanding of language in the Chomskian fashion.

This binary thinking about language is also present in Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralist linguistics. In his *Course in General Linguistics* (1997), Saussure argues that the object of study for linguistics should be the underlying system of conventions (words and grammar) by which a sign (word) can "mean". Language, says Saussure, is a system of signs; that the sign is the basic unit of meaning; and that the sign comprises a signifier (form) and signified (the "mental concept"; meaning), so that without this basic *difference* between the two, there would be no meaning at all. Indeed for Saussure, *it is the structure of "difference" that drives the process.*

For Saussure, this distinction does not refer to a name or a thing but to that between word image and the concept, which are separable only at the analytical level. This postulate above may be schematically represented thus:

$$\textbf{Sign} = \frac{\textit{signifier}\ \text{(the written or spoken mark)}}{\textit{signified}\ \text{(the mental concept)}}$$

Saussure also argues that the sign is *arbitrary*, so that the relation between the signifier and the signified is a matter of convention. In a famous passage, Saussure argues that "if words stood for pre-existing entities they would all have exact equivalents in meaning from one language to the next, but all this is not true" (Saussure, 1997: 116). Saussure concludes his discussion with the following celebrated remark, that *in language there are only differences without positive terms*. (121; original italics). Thus for Saussure, there is a distinction at the heart of the system of language: that between *langue* (the system of language; the system of form, namely rules, codes and conventions; it is the system which implicitly lies behind every word at every moment of utterance; it is shared by the whole society, and is already internalized) and *parole* (the speaking subject) and between *diachrony* (the linear and sequential relation of words in an utterance) and *synchrony* (the systematic whole existing at a given time):

> Langue is the social side of speech, outside the individual who can never create or modify it by himself; it exists only by virtue of a sort of contract signed by members of the community (4).

One implication of the *langue*/*parole* distinction is that no single person can create words or meanings: "the individual has no power to alter a sign in any respect once it has become established in a linguistic community" (68). In the same manner, Saussure also argues that the community, too, cannot, because of a complex mechanism of language alter a sign, even though everyone participates in language all the time, and is open to the influence of all. In Saussure's view, it is this, what he calls the community's "natural inertia", and the nature of the signifier to have both a temporal aspect and to produce a diachronic signifying chain that finally makes it impossible for "a linguistic revolution" to take place. Now what is clear is that Saussure has detached language from extra-linguistic referents, that is, has bracketed the question of reference, the relation between word and concept. Saussure's phrase "without

positive terms" may be interpreted as implying the necessary absence of "a centre" such as social relations or social structure.

And if *langue* constitutes a system separate from individuals, and if as Saussure says, it is the "product *passively registered without premeditation and without any reflection*" (118-9; my emphasis), then language is constantly and secretly slipping into the human mind a whole host of assumptions (the political implications of language; the relationship between language and ideology) that may never be critically examined by the individual or by the community.

This is where the complications of the social come into view: should language be studied *asocially*, that is, as an abstract structure isolated from the way people *use* it, or should it be studied in the context of its use in society by people who speak it within social relations? Yet even linguists such as Wardhaugh (2010) and Labov (2006) who urge linguists to take into account the social nature of language because, as Labov phrases it, "the linguistic behavior of individuals cannot be understood without knowledge of the communities that they belong to" (2006: 380). This means that linguists must take into account the ways in which language can or may be said to take on board or incorporate what may be called ""social inclusion".

Deployed as a concept and a composite word, "social-inclusion" implies that the users of a language not only share tacit agreements, or share or are conditioned by, or have to respond to convention or the rules of the language they speak but also that speaking a common language implies or could lead to both the social dilution of individualist identity and a socially shared sense of justice or what Hegel calls "recognition". For to be included in a linguistic social scheme is to be part of a larger linguistic or social scheme; in effect to be part of a group or a collection of speakers of a language. But does language *cause* a speaker of a language to be part of the collection of the users of that language (its collectivity)?

As we have seen in the preceding sections, both the Chomskian and the Saussurean paradigms of language study rest on a dualistic or binary division between "competence" and "performance" and between "langue" and "parole" (or, in the latter, *diachrony and synchrony*) respectively. The problem of binary thinking or scheme is that the first part of the binary structure is positive, primary, while the second part is negative, a fall, and aberrant (not-valued). In both Labov and Wardhaugh, for example, what is valued and made primary is the utterance (or the language use) of an atomistic speaker rather than the social context, or the social structures that condition the utterance or the language use, despite the apparent emphasis on the place of language in society. However, let it be stressed at this point that the social does not necessarily refer to society; neither is inclusion simply a societal marker in its own right.

The Habermasian Model: A Theory of Communicative Action

Jurgen Habermas seeks to overcome these limitations by proposing the concept of "communicative reason" in which the rational practice of reason is "concretized in history, society, body, and language" (1987: 317). Habermas argues that paradigms which privilege attention to the individual user of a language are still trapped within the framework of what he calls "the philosophy of consciousness" for which the relation of an isolated or solitary subject to something in the objective world "can be represented and manipulated". Habermas is dead set against the "philosophy of consciousness", namely the attempt to doubt and then to protect the capacity of the subject to represent objects, or "judge objectively the claim that a subject,

consciously representing to itself, can successfully refer to and make claims about objects other than its own consciousness" (Pippin 1997: 160).

His task is to avoid an unthinking transcendentalism (Heidegger) and a careless historicism (Hegel—a conception of reason as being above history and social life, or a reason anguished by historicism or the sociology of knowledge. To avoid all that Habermas insists on focusing instead on everyday practices of communicative reason and communicative action (inter-subjectivity; the distinctiveness of symbolic interaction). Thus Habermas insists on the distinct nature of communicative activity, and seeks to arrive at a genuinely mutual inter-subjective understanding, in which agents are not seen as manipulating or purposefully influencing each other.

The wider point is that Habermas offers a critique of the philosophy of the human subject in which the subject is "projected and made by subjects who find themselves in turn already projected and made in the historical process". The same individual subject is made to appear in society as an "objective network of relations that is either set… above the heads of subjects with their transcendentally prior mutual understandings… or where the subject finds itself centered in its body" (1990: 317). Habermas' other point is that linguistics, especially in the linguistic turn of philosophy (the analytical philosophy of language), has failed to accord autonomy to the the speaking subject (the individual user of language) and has, at the same time, failed to bridge over the dualism or dichotomies of language and the social (the objective world) but rather still oscillates helplessly between one and the other pole:

> Note even the linguistic turn of the praxis of philosophy leads to a paradigm change. Speaking subjects are either masters or shepard's of their linguistic system. Either they make use of language in a way that is creative of meaning, to disclose their world innovatively, or they are always already moving around within a horizon of a world disclosure taken care for them by language itself and constantly shifting behind their backs— language as the medium of creative practice… or as differential event" (1990: 317)

The gist of Habermas' critique as presented above is that the difficulties outlined in the passage above can be removed only if the "philosophy of consciousness" can be jettisoned and replaced with what he calls inter-subjective understanding or communication as part of an encompassing structure called *communicative rationality*. He proposes to replace a "monologic" structure with a dialogic conception of subjectivity and rationality by distinguishing between two kinds of action: action-oriented to success (instrumental and strategic action); a social world in which the subject is seen as an alien subject. The other, called communicative action, is where "the actions of the agents involved are coordinated not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding" (1990: 318-9). One implication of Habermas' argument is that reaching understanding is the inherent function of human speech, which consists in reaching agreement among seeking and active agents. He calls this the "world-disclosing" function of language:

> … the fundamental question [for Habermas] was not the possibility of representation of objects (or objective judgement, of reference, or intentionality)… but the possibility of communicative activity, the linguistic achievement of … intersubjective understanding. Representing objects could then have been seen as basically dependent on social, linguistic activities; all meaningful claims about objects, deeds, others,,, could have been understood as *functions* of socially redeemable 'validity claims' (Pippin 1997: 160).

Now the inclusive point is that Habarmas himself has not successfully followed the wider implications of this paradigm because he claims that understanding involves a relational sphere in which a listener accepts what he calls "a redeemable validity claim" made by the speaker. This means that the speaker alone gives the listener the warranty for listener's validity claim. Note that the only way an uncoerced agreement could be reached between the speaker and the listener is when the speaker offers a strong validity claim, independent of both an external force and the world, the social world, itself. At this moment, Habermas' paradigm takes us to the issue of the relationship between the social (social structure) and human action. Now let us probe the question of social structure if only to put the issue in a proper light.

Although there are many divergent and conflicting notions of "structure", the very idea or concept of structure is grounded in the notion that there are processes and relationships whose existence does not depend on the identity of the agents or subjects that participate in them; or that these processes or relationships exist independently of their perception or understanding by human agents or subjects; or, finally, that these processes go on, to use a metaphor of Hegel's, behind the backs of human agents. But whether one conceptualizes "structure" as a self-reproducing system which constitutes the subject, or as the unintended consequences of subjective action, or as a mutually interdependent expression of the discursive and the non-discursive, the concept of "structure" implies, by necessity, the existence of processes that take place independently of subjective consciousness, including the symbolic and the mental. This is because conceptual systems and discursive formations need, for their coherence, a notion of "structure" as "emergent properties of social interactions, arising from but irreducible to the actions and mental states of individual human beings" (Callinicos 2006: 184). This postulation avoids the conflating of self and world, the individual (the subject) and social existence (the real); and the correlative view which conceives the subject as created solely by, within, and for, the Symbolic. Thus on this view, *persons* are not, ipso facto, *structures*; for it is important to keep a view of structure and subjectivity as *ontologically* distinct.[1]

One distinctive virtue of this *relational* conception of structure and agency is that it conceives individual agents as real living, social organisms who shape and modify structures, and are in turn shaped and modified by structures. In this sense, a structure is a set of "differential relations":

> Social structure [is] a relation connecting persons, material resources, supra-individual entities [social institutions] and/or other structures by virtue of which persons... gain powers of a specific kind (Callinicos 2006: 189).

In general, then, structure sets limits on human agency in two senses, namely i) that human activity presupposes the prior existence of the raw materials for their activity; and ii) human activity involves the *reproduction* of the raw materials of their action, so that while human making and doing requires the prior existence of social forms, it is this same human making and doing that makes the existence of structures possible. Indeed it is this relational context that constitutes a structure, though the concept of structure also implies laws and regularities (for example, the law of genre and the recurrence of linguistic practice).

In this formulation, structure does have explanatory autonomy since it cannot, logically, be reduced to the human beings or their activity, or even to the notion of the subject, despite the realization that structure has a *dual* character in that it enables as well as constrains (structures provide the subject with resources, ideologies, motivations, and misrecognition, too). This is the value of Roy Bhaskar's definition of structure as "both the ever-present *condition* and the continually reproduced *outcome* of human agency" (1999: 43). This definition avoids a "mystical" conception of structure as something mysteriously existing on its own, without structural determination. Derrida on his part advocates "a movement of sensitization to the multiplicity of levels of structure at any instant "(2002: 88-9). For example, the subject is controlled by ideology, is split and divided by unconscious desires, and even subject to, and is the subject of, language, society, etc.

In the light of the preceding discussion, the problem can be expressed thus: social structure is the realm in which human action takes place; it is, in fact, the space that reproduces both the society and the individual. Not only that: social structure is where the speaker and the listener come to a shared understanding. Clearly, social structure is more fundamental of the two poles of the relations (social structure versus the subjects— speaker and listener). *Thus, here, Habermas fails to offer a systematic differentiation of the two poles of his binary structure. His resolute focus is the speaker-listener spectrum of rational agreement.* Once again, Habermas' philosophy of language has failed to sustain a space in which the social encompasses or incorporates two different subjects within the structure of "social inclusion" independently of the speaking-listening dualism. Rather, he has a monologic scheme, not a dialogic structure between the world disclosing function of language on the one hand and social structure and subjectivity on the other. Writing on Habermas' theory of communicative rationality, Callinicos argues:

> There is, to begin with, the strange idea that communication involves the speaker "offering" and the listener "accepting" the speech act, a transaction dependent on the former undertaking rationally to justify her utterance. Understanding is thereby disjointed from the addressee simply hearing an utterance in a language she knows, and comes to depend upon her recognizing undertakings made by the addressor but distinct from the content of the speech act itself… Then there is the idea that understanding consists in agreement. The hearer understands the speech act because she recognizes the speaker's undertaking to give reasons for whatever the utterance claims is (or will or should be)the case. But why should understanding so depend

> on an orientation towards rationally motivated agreement? We all hear a myriad of utterances with which we are unlikely ever to agree (1989: 105).

More examples could be given against Habermas' paradigm or model: understanding does not always depend on an orientation towards rationally motivated agreement. If a speaker says, for example, that "the Sun goes around the Earth", or that "there are aliens from the planet Mars hiding in packets of cornflakes being sold in the Kano supermarkets", or that "trees have a mind", there are no rational grounds for accepting those utterances as proper "validity claims". Thus we might think of cases where understanding does not lead to an acceptance to reach an agreement; for the ideal speech situation is not implicit in every speech act. Thus the connection Habermas seeks to establish between understanding and rationality may not always be sustained**.** On the whole, Habermas, despite himself, ultimately seeks a reconciliation between reason and subjectivity, the subject and its speech acts— and not with sociality (the social structure), which he confuses with a kind of "validity claims".

The Nietzschean Model: Language as Metaphor

Yet another challenge to the Habermasian model is Nietzsche's famous argument, namely that one could separate truth (tacit agreement) and rhetoric (playfulness that evades the world-disclosing function of language. This is usually described as "the performative function of language". In one of the most famous passages of *The Will to Power* (WP), Nietzsche argues that it is impossible to separate truth from rhetoric, or opinion from truth because, as he writes, tropes, or figures of speech, are "not something that can be added or subtracted from language at will; they are its truest nature". This is because, according to Nietzsche, there is "no such thing as a proper meaning that can be communicated only in certain particular cases"[2] (*The Will to Power*, III, § 516). In the same passage (WP III, § 516), Nietzsche writes:

> No such thing as an unrhetorical, 'natural' language exists that could be used as a point of reference: language is itself the result of purely rhetorical tricks and devices... Language is rhetoric, for it only intends to convey a *doxa* (opinion), not an *episteme* (truth) (1968: 279).

If Nietzsche is correct, what "agreement" could the listener possibly secure from the speaker? Indeed, Nietzsche's view of language has effectively undermined Habermas' communicative rationality in a fundamental way. On Nietzsche's argument, 1) an ontological difference exists between language and the things spoken about in language; 2) a fundamental difference exists between the "constitutive understanding of the world" and "what is constituted in the world". Here, the difference, or the differential structure, is clear: language is *rhetoric* (doxa; opinion; belief) and not an *episteme* that expresses such things as "truth", or "cognitive efficacy", and that it does not disclose the "horizon of meaning" within which knowing and acting and speaking subjects interpret their experiences about the truth, the world, or the intransitive dimension of experience as a whole.

Thus in a single stroke, Nietzsche has thrown into question "the truth of language" (or even the conceptual coherence of speech acts). Citing a passage from Nietzsche's *Philosophy*

in the Tragic Age of the Greeks (1962) and from *The Will to Power* (1968), De Man highlights Nietzsche's oft-quoted view that tropes are not a mere supplement or an addition to language; rather, they are "its truest nature". In the same passage, Nietzsche argues that there "is no such thing as a proper meaning that can be communicated only in certain particular cases" (quoted in De Man, 1979: 105). Indeed Nietzsche has undermined any interaction between "world-disclosing language" and "truth and communicative rationality", as propounded by Habermas, for example. The Nietzschean wholesale undermining of truth and language is succinctly described below by Hayman:

> Nietzsche saw that we can have no objective knowledge about the facts which determine our condition, that all our perception and cerebration can only be speculative, interpretative [and] it is his insistence that there is no fundamental connection between the name and the thing, between signifier and signified, [that] prepared the ground for linguistic philosophy and for structural analysis (1980: 3).

Harris (1981), Harris (1996), and Harpham (2002**)** have questioned what may be called the "the metaphysics of language alone".[3] On this view, it is not clear in which sense language itself is a stable and determined object. Those authors have questioned a view of language as capable of supplying determinate knowledge (for nothing in intellectual history has done so). Harpham, for example, argues that "nothing meaningful" can be said about language as such because "language 'as such' is not available for direct observation and because the features, aspects, characteristics, and qualities that can be attributed to language approach the infinite" (2002: ix).

And if we view language as signifier, then we have to also see language as signification itself because language involves not just sounds, words, sentences, and signs but also any kind of meaningful object such as trees, rocks, chairs, rivers, texts, and other human beings, "anything and everything capable of communication or expression of any kind" (Harpham, 2002: 32). Yet it is also true that as signified, language is that process towards which signifiers point "beyond their immediate referents" (Harpham, 2002: 33); in other words, to all things concrete. And if this is the case, it is not clear where "literary language" (for example) lies– as a signifier (communication and expression, sounds, words and sentences) or as a signified (referents, sociality, and social structures)[4].

The Rortyean Model: The Contingency of Language

Richard Rorty famously denies that language is a medium of expression or representation; rather, he argues, it is no more than the *noises and quirks and marks that we use to get what we want*; and that to say truth is not out there is to say that "where there are no sentences there is no truth, that sentences are elements of human languages, and that human languages are human creations" (1989: 5; see also Rorty, 1992: 1-8). One implication of Rorty's argument is that we need to move "descriptions of the world" from criterion-governed sentences within language games because language games do not proceed by (choice of) reference to criteria. On Rorty's argument, the world does not speak; only humans do speak because humans get to programme ourselves with a language (game), that is when we can hold beliefs; for the world cannot, Rorty

argues, propose a language for humans to speak; "only other humans can do that" (6). Thus it is us humans who play language games and not the world, not reality, not anything out there. Yet even here, Rorty denies that even language games are "something deep within us". Indeed for Rorty, we move from one language game to another:

> But if we can ever be reconciled to the idea that most of reality is indifferent to our descriptions of it, and that the human self is created by the use of a vocabulary, then we should at last have assimilated what was true in the Romantic idea that truth is made rather than found. What is true about this claim is just that *languages* are made rather than found and that truth is a property of linguistic entities, of sentences (1989: 7; original emphasis).

Now on the preceding view, anything could be made to look good, bad, desirable or otherwise simply by being *re-described*. Thus for Rorty, *re-describing* lots and lots of things does lead to linguistic change and then also to cultural change. This may also lead to the production of "human beings of a sort that had never before existed". This means that "talent for speaking differently, rather than arguing well is the chief instrument of cultural change… Human brings whose language changed… no longer spoke of themselves as responsible to nonhuman powers… [became] a new kind of human beings" (7). For Rorty, the chief task or method is to "redescribe lots and lots of things in new way until you have created a pattern of linguistic behavior which will tempt the rising generations to adopt it, thereby causing them to look for appropriate new forms of non-linguistic behavior, for example, the adoption of new scientific equipment or new social institutions" (9).

Rorty's conceptual move is to underscore the ontological *contingency of language*, or at least the language that humans use to get what they want, or that they use to re-describe old topics in new ways or create the condition in which new re-descriptions appear more attractive or more and more compelling[5]. In a way, then, for Rorty, only sentences can be truth; or, rather, sentences are the creation of sentences; or, indeed, human beings make truths by making "languages in which to phrase sentences" (9).

Now in relation to our developing problematic, the relationship between language and sociality on the one hand and language and social inclusion on the other, Rorty's "philosophy of language" has broken with the idea that language is something that should or must draw its normativity from the world or from the self. On this view, the question of adequacy or inadequacy of language to a reality or the human self or human self-understanding is out of the question. Thus in a single move, Rorty has cut off language from social reality or the human self (that is the implication of the view that language is neither a medium of expression nor of representation). He has also devastated the idea, expressed by Heidegger (in *What is Thinking?* 1968**),** that language makes humans or speaks humans (or the human; Derrida calls this view the "the Heideggerian ontologising of language"), or that it is reality, social or natural, that makes language what it is in itself[6]. Now this also, by implication, undermines the notion that language can be a *unity*, something, to cite Rorty directly, "a third thing which stands in some determinate relation with two other unities— the self and reality… and as barriers between persons and cultures" (1989: 13-4).

In a way, then, Rorty has disconnected language from reality and the self; his notion of the contingency of language means that all that is required is to change the way humans talk or write (re-descriptions), if only they want to change what they want or change what they are. As for the Rortyean argument for the contingency of language, it is present in his view that the linguist should thus be a "liberal ironist", one who has a vivid awareness of the groundlessness of his ultimate commitments; has radical and continuing doubts about his final vocabulary, because he has been impressed by other vocabularies; has realized that arguments phrased in his present vocabulary can neither underwrite nor dissolve these doubts; and that insofar as he theorizes about his situation, he does not think that his vocabulary is closer to reality than others (1989: 73). In other words, Rorty favours "self-creation" above empirical authenticity; a situation in which one is always aware that the terms in which they describe themselves are subject to change; or that one is always aware of the fragility and contingency of their final vocabularies.

This means that the linguist as much as the philosopher of language or the cultural critic should have no need for a "final vocabulary", namely some concept or word that "acts", or that serves as the master code, grid, or coordinate that grounds, and should ground, his analyses or interpretations, and which, "if doubt is cast on the worth of these words, their user has no noncircular argumentative recourse. Those words are as far as he can go with language; beyond them there is only helpless passivity or a resort to force" (1989: 73). Thus social inclusion is out the window in Rorty's philosophy of language or his cultural theory (even his epistemology).

The Lacanian Model: Language as (the) Unconscious

Jacques Lacan's "Psychoanalytical linguistics" (for want of a better description) which derives both from a famous re-reading of Freud (especially on the question of the Unconscious) and from Saussure's structural linguistics in his *Course in General Linguistics*) promises to open up a relatively new understanding of the constitution of the subject in language, and in the family and the society as a whole. According to Lacan, the acquisition of language is central in the formation of the unconscious in that the child passes through various stages in the course of recognizing itself as a separate entity, that is, as a subject. Thus for Lacan, it is in the learning of language that the child, now a subject, enters into the Symbolic Order. Thus it is language that "positions" the subject in the wider social structure (as a male or female, the very identity which also makes the subject a *gendered* subject). One implication of Lacan's theory is that the subject is always de-centred— which suggests that there is no such thing as a *united* or *unified* subject of consciousness. On this view, the unconscious itself is like or is actually language. For example, Lacan has argued that "Beyond 'the word', what the psychoanalytic experience discovers in the unconscious is the whole structure of language… the unconscious is structured like a language" (1985: 266). Lacan's *linguistic* interpretation of the unconscious implies a decisive move from humans or agents and their intentions (or even intentionality as such) towards language, which Lacan famously describes as "a process without a subject". For Lacan, the processes of *condensation* and *displacement* (the dream-work and unconscious processes) follow "the law of the signifier" (language), so that even human instinctual content (desire) resides in language— a mechanism that supposedly exists beyond the conscious control

of human subjects. Lacan's critique allows the exploration of the link between unconscious mechanisms on the one hand and language on the other, so that both the subject and its speech acts become at odds, or in active conflict, with each other. In this ever-receding circuit of relationships, the subject ultimately fails to speak "its" so-called meaning.

On Lacan's linguistic theory, linguistic structures are the primary mechanisms by which human desires and fantasies make themselves manifest, although Lacan also makes it clear that even these structures do not manifest themselves at the conscious level of the individual's speech or utterance (*parole*) but function as unconscious *langue* (the system of rules, codes and conventions). This means that the structures behind the individual speaker's *parole* are "transindividual", and show themselves in the *way* the speaker implicitly says or does not say rather than in what he says. As Kearney (1986: 277) phrases it, for Lacan, "it is in the *faults* of communication rather than in its *fitness* that our unconscious is revealed... if the unconscious is the 'censored chapter' of language, our conscious discourse is the abridged or officially approved version".

Again, for Lacan, individual consciousness does not speak language; it is unconscious language which speaks through individual consciousness. This is why for Lacan the ego is always subordinate to the unconscious, and could never have mastery over it. In sum, then, Lacan's *linguistic* interpretation of the unconscious implies a decisive move from persons, authors, readers, or characters (from humans or agents or authors and their intentions, or even intentionality as such) towards texts and writing, the latter as a process without a subject, i.e. without author or intentionality. One reason for this is that meaning as such (what an individual speaker says) cannot have a secure meaning in that, in principle, meaning is comprised of, and unleashes a play and a diversity of conflicting and contradictory meanings. In a word, for Lacan the human subject is not the author of meaning. In a memorable passage, Lacan writes, "it is the world of words that create the world of things... Man speaks them, but it is because the symbol has made him man" (1985: 105).

Lacan's situating of the subject in the family, gender, and social relations within the structure of language has huge implications for social theory: 1) language is constitutive of reality; 2) language "positions" the subject with supra-individual structures (gender and ideology, for example); 3) the unconscious is language itself, although the former is not a space of stable identity or relations; 4) without language, there is no gender, identity, or ideology (desire). In a famous passage Lacan argues that "there is nothing in the unconscious which accords with the body. The unconscious is discordant. The unconscious is that which, by speaking, determines the subject as being…" (Lacan 1975: 110).

Nevertheless, in light of the developing theme of this paper, Lacan;s philosophy of language does *thin out* the role of social structures in the constitution of the subject; that role is given to language, but without a rigorous theory or account of how language itself is constituted. All that's left is what Derrida would call a "metaphysics of presence" (*parousia* or logocentrism— the notion that reality is directly given to consciousness or the subject; or that the subject can have direct access to reality, that is, without a discursive intermediary). Although for Lacan language is the starting point, it is not clear how social structures influence linguistic behaviour or speech acts. Moreover, Lacan does not theorise any mediating mechanisms in the language-family-ideology-social structure nexus. As Wolf (1993: 134)

argues, language, discourse, and systems of representation (ideology, for example), "should not simply be recognized in their constitutive role, but also seen as themselves constituted. In an important but highly ambiguous way, then, Lacan has inserted the human subject into a kind of "sociality" (the family) but has, at the same time, expelled the subject from social structure, since both the subject and social structures are themselves constituted in and by language. Thus Lacan's insistence on the signifier (following Saussure) and his denial of an independent signified, lead to just such a conclusion:

> With the insistence… on the primacy of the signifier over the signified, we run the risk of according total determining power to language and sign systems, which are seen not only to constitute subjects, but also to constitute the real world which they represent. Now it is true that we have no access to any 'real' world except through the systems of representation which enable us to conceive of it. It is disingenuous to conclude from this that signs or signifiers, have free play in constructing the world (Wolf, 1993: 134).

A more devastating critique of Lacan's linguistic positivism is Derrida's argument that the hypostatization of language (which we see in many guises) is a kind of the "metaphysics of the 'proper', of *logocentrism, linguisticism, phonologism*, the demystification or the de-sedimentation of the autonomic hegemony of language" (Derrida, 1994: 92; original italics); that Deconstruction (which refuses hypostatisation of any kind) is a search for the other of language; that to say there is nothing but language is to be imprisoned in language; that the other of language "summons language… [which] is perhaps not a "referent" in the normal sense which linguists have attached to the term" (1993: 197-98; see also Derrida 1984):

> I take great interest in questions of language and rhetoric, and I think they deserve enormous consideration; but there is a point where the authority of final jurisdiction is neither rhetorical nor linguistic, nor even discursive. The notion of trace or of text is introduced to mark the limits of the linguistic turn. This is one more reason why I prefer to speak of 'mark' rather than language. In the first place the mark is not anthropological; it is prelinguistic; it is the possibility of language, and it is everywhere there is relation to another thing or relation to an other. For such relations, the mark has no need for language (Derrida, 2002: 76).

Literature and Social Inclusion

Perhaps Literature as a body and practice of writing is the Other of language, the "mark", as Derrida has implied. Indeed there is an assumption, widespread in traditions within modern literary studies, that literature and the social go hand in hand; that is, a kind of more or less nice symmetry exists between literary representations (whether in poetry, drama, and prose-fiction, say the novel, especially) and sociality (or that which probably exceeds language as conceptualized by the linguists that we have discussed above). The idea is that in literature, we see characters or poetic narrators speaking, acting, engaging in all forms of dialogic exchanges, conversational self-assertion and perspectival fudging, skirting, and ducking. Nevertheless,

literature defies a sociological theory, although one could do a sociology of the novel or drama but it is difficult to reduce the literary to a sociological paradigm in which “the social” (much less “social inclusion”) is central.

Throughout literary history, it is difficult to find instances in which literature (or, to use the pre-modern term, *belles lettres*) was valued for its social significance. It was always *literary value* or cultural edification, based on literary criteria that was held up as the most distinguishing value or significance of literary material. Take, for example, ancient Greece (classical literary appreciation), roughly between the 5th and 4th century BCE, when a group of thinkers and philosophers, from Plato (427-347 BCE) and Aristotle (384-322 BCE) to Longinus (100 AD) and Plotinus (300AD), among others, began to pay attention to a distinctive kind of writing that used to be called "belles-lettres", what we today call "the genres of literature", namely poetry, prose-fiction, and drama. Note, however, that texts we would not now consider "belles-lettres" such as Herodotus's *The Histories* (a 9-volume book, part history, part narrativization of the Greek wars with Persia from mythical times to his own day) was considered "fine writing", very much like the "belles-lettres" kind of writing (see, on this Cassidy, 1997).

For years, Homer's works had existed and were the stuff of literate culture, identity and cultural literacy and education. The Homeric poems (700 BCE) were the stock of cultural literacy and the criterion of knowledge and excellence in ancient Greece for centuries. Indeed it has been argued that literary criticism in the period began with Xenophanes (flourished 570 BCE), when he criticized the disparaging, condescending portrayal of the gods in Homer's and Hesiod's works. Another critic, Theagenes (flourished 525 BCE) offered allegorical interpretations of Homer in an effort to defuse previous criticisms of Homer's works, and, in effect, argued for a new "naturalistic-allegorical" interpretation in which the gods depicted in Homer's works were only an allegorical presentation (a symbolic, not literal, expression of human attributes and characteristics).

This widely acclaimed special kind of writing (consisting of historical texts, tragic dramas, poems, and prose works on rhetoric and disputations on many subjects), was considered by the educated sections of society as "elegant writing" or "literature"— a kind of writing that is valued for its elegance and aesthetic qualities rather than for any human interest or moral or instructive content. This kind of writing was also said to be special in the way it handled the formal properties of texts such as narrative strategies, plot, elevated language, impressive or complex depiction of characters, and the beauty of style of the writing. This model of writing was based on classical Latin, Greek, and Roman texts written by authors such as Lucretius, Cicero, Livy, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Quintilian, Sophocles, Euripides, (5th-century BCE Greek tragic playwrights), Aeschylus, Pindar, Homer, Virgil, Petrarch, etc.

The authors of the "belles-lettres" were also regarded as the bearers of texts that had profundity and sublimity of spirit, and the perfection of Form. Those writers took writing seriously because they sought to reveal the complexities of human character and the place of the human in the world. They cultivated highly refined language, the highest literary skills of artistic presentation (and, sometimes, strong moral values) in their poems, prose fiction, and drama.

Although Plato (1984) did not consider "imaginative " literature important enough to attract the attention of the philosopher, his general views about Beauty and Goodness ("Beauty is Good, or a kind of Good) were used by subsequent literary critics to highlight the importance of imaginative literature in the perfection of Beauty and the elegance and beauty of genres such as poetry and drama in the development of a viable curriculum for the inculcation of emotional and intellectual profundity in younger people. In his famous work, the *Poetics* (1991). Aristotle seeks to explore the very nature of imaginative literature itself. For example he defines (tragic) drama as a mode of imitation. This means that it is an imitation of serious action, an action that is likely to arouse pity and fear, or what he calls the "catharsis" of such emotions. Aristotle also claimed that the so-called real life does not speak for itself, and cannot have any meaning, until it is bestowed, as in poetry or drama, with a significance, and emplotted into a meaningful structure of narrative (complete with a central subject, a well-marked beginning, middle, and end, and a narrative voice).

The Greek writer and poet, Horace (65-8 BCE), wrote an essay entitled "Ars Poetica", where he argues that the poet should cultivate three things, namely polished technique, felicitous style, and natural self-projection. According to Horace, those three qualities would make the poet or the writer to avoid the flashy style that would ruin the overall pattern of his work. Horace insists that no writer or poet should be allowed to escape from the disciplined critical examination of his work by critics and the highly educated reader. For this reason, Horace recommends that the poet and the writer should write a well-ordered piece and a lucid and felicitous work, and write only what is necessary, choose the most appropriate devices of presentation, and be sensitive to the *form* within which he writes or works.

Horace is famous for his insistence that the writer must aim at the highest standards of poetic or artistic excellence, a theme that is right for the subject of the writing, and a sound sense of the previous models. All this is intended by Horace to get the poet or the writer to see the need for brevity in the service of memorability and plausibility in the service of instruction and delight. In other words, Horace wants critics of imaginative literature to look for good writing, excellence of formal technique, the mixture of instruction and delight, the grace and polish of theme and presentation, and a sense of proportion and discipline in the choice of words. Longinus, the author of the acclaimed book, *On the Sublime*, makes a number of claims for good writing, among which are that poetic excellence is based on the poet's *emotional* and *intellectual* profundity and seriousness, and that sublimity, the cultivation and achievement of awe-inspiring beauty, excellence, elegance, (the sublime, the highest moral or spiritual worth) are an *effect* of the *spirit* (attitude, disposition, enthusiasm, will or sense of self).

According to Longinus, when a writer has "excellence of style" it means that he has a "great soul"; that if the writer has powerful emotion, his craft will also have effective emotion. Longinus would recommend that literary critics look in a work of literature for such things as mastery of the devices and methods of presentation, a vital sensitivity to the qualities of words, the force and relevance or appropriateness of imagery, the orderly placing of the right or most appropriate words. For Longinus, imaginative literature should have the qualities of wit, rhythm, cadence, sonority, roundedness, and fluent execution. In short, for Longinus, if the work is profound, then it is the effect of the writer's natural gift and a capacity for a disciplined exercise of profound artistry (see, on this, Blamires, 1991, pp. 1-24; Cassidy, 1997, pp. 10-45).

Note, at this point, that the sociality of literary material was not given any pride of place. And this has continued well into the modern age, in which the term "literature" emerged as a special kind or practice of writing. Indeed the term "literature" is derived from the French "littérature" and from the Latin "litteratura"— "littera", being a letter (of the alphabet) which variously means, from the Renaissance (15th-16th the century) onwards, letters; book-learning (as in the expression, "A man of letters"); acquaintance or familiarity with books; polite and humane learning; a culture acquired through learning books; the professionalization of writing. By the 17th century, the Romantics (Novalis, Schelling, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Blake, etc.) saw poetry is a *transcendental* experience: "Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best mind" (Shelley, 2003: 697). "All good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: though this is true, Poems to which value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts…" (Wordsworth, 1944 (II): 385). (On European Romanticism, see Furst 1980).

For Immanuel Kant (2018), creativity and the Imagination and Intuition and Feeling are the central dimensions of human thought. Thus according to Kant (1911), an adequate concept can never be found to describe the aesthetic faculty. For Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, literary form, as the interconnected and flowing life of the spirit, is the "objective reality" itself, "the original as yet unconscious poetry of the spirit" (1978: 12). From this perspective, organic form is a centre to get at and to realize: the novelist, or the poet, for example, is always standing behind her work.

In the Post-Romantic era (19th Century—), various authors and literary scholars (Eliot, Wimsatt, Beardsley, Booth, Leavis, etc.) conceptualized Literature is a body of imaginative-creative works of great literary-artistic-aesthetic value; a body of writing possessing distinct beauty of form and emotional effects – the great works of a writing tradition; literature is a valued selection of creative texts in a national language and which articulates the "best self" of the language; as the "biography" of a nation (Thomas Macaulay, "Minutes on Indian Education", 1835); literature as the great works of a writing tradition: genuinely great literature both arises out of the past ("the tradition") and modifies the past (Eliot, *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, 1919); and literature as the best that is thought and said in the world; "sweetness and light"; human culture complete on all its sides (Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, 1864).

In relatively recent literary history, literature has developed into the very image of *modernity* itself: A body of *written* works; the whole tradition of books and writing (Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 1977); *poetic* realities which shape and pattern; a form of textual-making (Widdowson, *Literature*, 1999); an institutional object (an object for the institution of writing and publishing, reviewing, and literary studies in tertiary education) because Literature is not a "natural kind" but rather exists within conventions of production and reception—writing, interpretation, and response by writers and readers (Lamarque and Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature*, 1994; New, *Philosophy of Literature*, 1999 Lamarque, *The Philosophy of Literature*, 2009); the possibility for any utterance, writing or notation to be iterated in many contexts and to function in the absence of an identifiable speaker, context, reference or

hearer/reader (Derrida, *Acts of Literature*, 1992); a historically specific institutionally organized field of *textual* uses and effects (Foucault 1984: 114); an "introduction" of meaning into Being, an introduction, in the form of poetic composition and literary representation of the Other, in which the Same gives (linguistic, cultural, and spiritual) *signs* to the Other in order to undo the linguistic, cultural, and intellectual structures of monopoly, sameness, and bondage (Levinas 1996: 147); and a *profession* of writing; a *unique*, fabricated, invented "story-world" (Laird 1999). The final delinking of literature and the social (the text from sociality) comes in the form of two interesting conceptualisation of the term "literature-as-fiction" and "literature-as-mark":

> I assert nothing when I make up a story as fiction, so… I do not assert something that is true or false, even by coincidence (Urmson, 1976: 155).

> To write [literature] is to produce a mark that will constitute a kind of machine that is in turn productive, that my future disappearance in principle will not prevent from functioning and from yielding, and yielding itself to, reading and rewriting... For the written to be written, it must continue to "act" and to be legible even if what is called the author of the writing no longer answers for what he has written, for what he seems to have signed, whether he is provisionally absent, or if he is dead, or if in general he does not support, with his absolutely current and present intention or attention, the plenitude of his meaning, of the very thing which seems to be written "in his name"... The situation of the scribe and of the subscriber, as concerns the written, is fundamentally the same as that of the reader. This essential drifting, due to writing as an iterative structure cut off from all absolute responsibility, from *consciousness* as the authority of the last analysis, writing orphaned, and separated at birth from the assistance of its father, is indeed what Plato condemned in the Phaedrus... (Derrida 1984: 316).

Urmson has delinked literature or the literary text from non-fictional realities, from truth, sociality, the social, inclusion or such properties of what Rorty would call "the world out there". Derrida, on his part, has removed literature or the literary material from the subject, subjectivity, consciousness, structure, intentionality, intentional stances, from proper names, and sociality. At the same time, Derrida re-describes literature as an "act", as a performative structure, and as performance, as responsibility to itself, legibility-as-performance, as a drifting-without-a-terminus (or destination). Indeed Derrida elsewhere re-describes literature as that "fictive institution in which in principle one is allowed to say anything by … translating figures into one another by breaking out of prohibitions" (1992: 36, 42); an "absolute hospitality" a hospitality that offers solace and help to the Other, a hospitality "invented for the singularity of a new arrival, of the unexpected visitor" (Derrida 2000: 83).

Note that there is not a hint in those two authors about the social function of literature, much less its sociality as a grammatological structure, not a hint about literature as that space in which humans and their cultural identity speak or make a presence. Worse, literature has now been re-described as *Biterature*. As if influenced by Derrida's conception of literature or

the literary material as just a "mark", an essential "drafting" of "the mark" in "the name" of its fictionality, proponents of Biterature such as Swarski, who argues, in his recent book, *From Literature to Biterature* (2013: 5-6) that "at a certain point in the already foreseeable future, computers will be able to create works of literature in and themselves". Swirsky's work is devoted to the field of narrative intelligence, artificial intelligence, and artificial emotion (see, on this Swirsky 2000; Swirsky 2007). However, the key problematic of the new conception of literature as "biterature" (bitic literature; texts based on strings of binary digits, or bits that form a computer's chain of instructions) is the condition of possibility for computers (or machines) to become capable of fictional (creative, novelistic, or poetic) writing, and the extent to which computers can be authors ("computhors"), or capable of authorship and intentionality ("computhorship"), and the question of authorial *ex*tension (cf. *in*tention) as they pertain to computers and other machines. Now the author (the alledged authorizing conscious of the text) is now, in the Biterature conception, a "computhor". For Swirsky,

> … acknowledging biterature as a species of literature entails adopting the same range of attitudes to computhors as to human writers. Specifically, it entails approaching them as agents with internal states, such as, for instance, creative intentions [and as] useful theoretical fictions (2013: 7-8).

Swirsky's conception of bitic literature is influenced by Stanislaw Lem's definition of biterature as *"any work of nonhuman origin– one whose real author is not a human being"* (1985: 41). Interestingly, even Derrida's "definition" of literature can fulfill Lem's definition of biterature outlined above. For Lem, biterature is any work of fiction that is of non-human origin, and whose author is a machine, what may be called "meta-author" (as opposed to "real authors"). It follows, then, that the author is any device, human or not, that is the terminal stage in the production of a text or work. However, this is uncannily close to Derrida's description of "literature" as writing, that is, as an "iterative structure" bereft of any form of unlimited responsibility from *consciousness* as the supreme authority; that is, writing removed from the control of a conscious or omnipresent perception, and "separated at birth" from the support of its father-subject (what Derrida calls "ontotheology").

With those discussions of literature/biterature, we come to a point at which the social, sociality, and inclusive praxis (in social or sociological terms) have dissolved into a series of signifiers (Saussure), a communicative action (Habermas), mere rhetorical flourish; a tropical play (Nietzsche); language games (Rorty); the discordant unconscious (Lacan); a fictive space beyond normativity (Urmson); and iterative structure without intentional stances; "what just happens" (Derrida).

Conclusion

In (the) light of the preceding discussion, and taking into account the challenge of the philosophies of language in which it is either the pure speech act (without the speaker), the recrudescence of the communicative act, that is also a form of communicative reason (reason without reference to the "philosophy of consciousness") and language as nothing more than a language game without truth and without reality and without an intentional stance, a conception

of literature or the literary material as pure fiction, pure form (without truth, morality, or ethnics), a drifting cut off from, again, "the philosophy of consciousness", we have to conclude that neither Language nor Literature has any space for social inclusion; for were it to include the social, sociality, or social relations (inclusiveness; or what Donald Davidson calls "the principle of charity"), language or literature would be wholly transparent and a kind of "the myth of the given".

Linguistics, whether seen as a formalism, a science, a sociology lacks the concept of "social structure", without which neither sociality nor social inclusion as such would be possible or be the basis for a coherent research programme that is oriented to extra-linguistic referents. Thus modern linguistics is simply a *technē* devoted to the study of the language system and the speech acts of putative or actual humans in a social situation but does not, even with sociolinguistics, touch the soil, as it were**.** In fact, social inclusion can only function in the linguistics or the literary domains as an *intertext*, a *convention* of genre (the historical novel; the love poem; or naturalistic drama), a *semantic production* (dramatic or narrative situations, characters speaking, forms of speech representation—free indirect discourse, interior monologue), a linguistic-textual *field of effects*, and a space of and for *semiotic-language games*.

We must conclude, then, that the social, sociality, and social inclusion (community) have died, or have been dispensed with, in language and literature. For the Barthian "death-of-the-author" thesis also inaugurates the death of all kinds of intentional stances, the very markers of sociality and social inclusion. Therefore: Language and Literature are writing; and where there is the sign, there is the possibility of language games, the binary of "competence: and performance", the possibility for the mark or the sign (or the signifier) to encode its own s-p-a-c-i-n-g or its own "(w)rites" of non-identity that, nevertheless, include non-existence anywhere anywhen.

Notes

1. Note that "structure" in this sense is not an ultimately *human* product but a determinate absence, very like Derrida's concept of singularity, since, as he writes, "nothing is homogeneous" (1992:53). In this sense, "structure" cannot be collapsed into "representation" or a simulacrum of the object, as Roland Barthes (1972) has argued.
2. Compare Nietzsche's and Donald Davidson's conception of metaphor. Davidson argues that there is no manual for determining what a metaphor 'means' or 'says' and that "metaphors mean what the words, in their most literal interpretation, mean, and nothing more"(1984: 245). On this view, metaphors do not have two meanings or layers of meaning, a literal and a non-literal (or not-literal meaning). Indeed, argues Davidson, a metaphor has no meaning, and does not say anything, beyond its literal meaning. In my view, Davidson's view is both a challenge and a complication of Nietzsche's that "language is rhetoric, for it only intends to convey a *doxa* (opinion), not an *episteme* (truth) (1968: 279).
3. Harpham has argued that without human intentionality, a collection of signs cannot be a meaningful statement, since without a posited founding subject, or a substantial human being "marks remain marks, and cannot even become statements" (2002:50). In

a critical study of Foucault's anti-humanist discourse on language (language minus the subject), Harpham shows how the figure of the repressed ("the human") repeatedly haunts Foucault's discourse: while language alone is allowed to speak, while for Foucault humans are only a grammatical fold, and while for him language is non-contingent and overbearing, Foucault still resorts to the gentle, silent, intimate consciousness typical of humanist ideology. Indeed Foucault again and again has to relocate language in the human. Once again, a strident anti-humanism shows, through the return of the repressed, "the impossibility of an adequate conception of language that does not include assumptions about human nature and human life" (Harpham 2002: 50).

4. Now the preceding discussion should undermine the conceptual purity of Eichenbaum's notion of "literary language" (Eichenbaum, 1998). Consider, for a moment, the Formalist notion of "literariness". Inspected closely, it turns out to be another name for "literary language", "science", "form", "device" and "poetic language". Nevertheless, for the Eichenbaum and the Formalists, it is these items that constitute what the Formalists call *language*; and this in spite of the obvious contradiction that this conception of language is more *symbolic* (even *virtual*) than linguistic. This alone should bear the truth of the argument, first made by Saussure, that "there is no single way of determining which aspect of language is logically prior to or more fundamental than the other" (cited in Harpham 2002: 57). The implication of this is that the initial determination of the core of the Formalist conception of language (literary or poetic) must have been *arbitrary*, an attempt to evade, rather than *scientifically* prove, the non-necessity, the contingent and accidental character, of the extra-literary, extra-linguistic aspects of their thinking, namely a concern, though repressed and denied, with the old themes of humanist metaphysics, namely human nature, human agency, and human society.
5. According to Rorty (1989; also Rorty 1982; Rorty, 1992; and Rorty, 2007), all human beings have a "final vocabulary, which he calls "a set of words which they employ to justify their actions, their beliefs and their lives". These words are the person's "final vocabulary." These words are *final* in the sense that "if doubt is cast on the worth of these words, their user has no noncircular argumentative recourse. Those words are as far as he can go with language; beyond them there is only helpless passivity or a resort to force". (1989: 73) Yet in our private, reflective moments we can contemplate the *fragility* and *contingency* of even the language in which we express our most heartfelt commitments; and that one should always be aware that the terms in which they describe themselves are subject to change; or that one should always be aware of the fragility and contingency of their final vocabularies. Needless to say, this should undermine dogmatism, intolerance, and the most hopeless metaphysical claims about one's absolute rightness or special powers, etc.
6. Notice Heidegger's argument that the interpreter of sign systems "can never say of himself what is most his own" but must remain unsaid because the "sayable word receives its determination from the Unsayable" (1968: 55; see also Heidegger, 1977). This is the sense in which signification or the signifying practice itself leaves nothing

behind it but "unsaids" because the sign receives its "determination" from what it excludes, from the perpetual play of the signifier. Yet it is this space of the undecidable that calls interpretation to its mission, namely to produce a critique of the sign even though this critique is itself one more movement of the sign itself. This formulation echoes Derrida's *bon mot* that "production" is itself a "text", a structure of "writing" and "reading" outside which there is nothing but "blind spot" (1976: 164)

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