

Looking for a Logic in Derrida: Assessing Hurst's "Plural Logic of the Aporia"

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Summary

Derrida was increasingly overt in later years that he employed a kind of "logic", in which the classical tools of reasoning have their place. This article thus enquires into whether Derrida can be approached logically – to seek this logic – through the foil of Andrea Hurst's¹ work. Hurst suggests Derrida proceeds via one "plural logic", arising from the nonpresence of any concept, contamination and refusal of choice from binary options. These interact to arrive at aporia. Derrida's system thus works via one "internal/external" binary which proceeds in constructive and destructive moments. However, this article suggests that despite arguing for consistency, Hurst elides contradiction as a tool, thus cannot distinguish error from aporia. A critical criterion which utilises noncontradiction is developed, which suggests some ways by which seeking Derrida's logic could proceed, then points to the importance of suspension of logic in Derrida's work. The immediate practical application is to the question of whether Derrida is politically relevant, and it is hoped the outcome will justify the use of this method in reading Derrida.

Opsomming

Derrida was in sy later jare toenemend openlik dat hy 'n tipe "logika" waarin die klassieke redenasie-middele tot hul reg kom, beoefen het. Hierdie artikel stel dus die vraag of Derrida logies benader kan word, en poog om toegang tot hierdie logika te bekom deur middel van die teenstelling wat Andrea Hurst se werk bied. Hurst gee aan die hand dat Derrida 'n "plurale logika" volg wat spruit uit die nieteenwoordigheid van enige konsep of kontaminasie en die weiering om uit binêre opsies te kies. Hierdie dinge tree in wisselwerking met mekaar en lei sodoende tot filosofiese twyfel of *aporia*. Derrida se stelsel werk dus via binêre opposisie, naamlik intern/ekstern, wat in konstruktiewe en destruktiewe momente aangeroe word. Die artikel gee egter aan die hand dat, hoewel Hurst ten gunste van konsekwentheid betoog, sy teenstelling as 'n werktuig weglaat, en dus nie tussen mistasting en *aporia* kan onderskei nie. 'n Kritiese maatstaf wat nieteenstrydigheid benut, word ontwikkel. Dit dui op enkele maniere waarvolgens die soeke na Derrida se logika kan voortgaan, en wys dan op die belangrikheid van die opskorting van logika in Derrida se werk.

1. All references to Hurst are indicated by H [date]: [page(s)].

Die onmiddellike praktiese toepassing is op die vraag of Derrida polities relevant is, en daar word gehoop dat die uitkoms van die artikel die gebruik van hierdie metode in die lees van Derrida sal regverdig.

The first contributions in the debate as to whether Derrida's work is systematic probably emerged in 1986 – Gasché is the most well-known proponent, and one could add Harvey and Llewellyn.² However, if such systematisation then seemed risky, in the 1990s Derrida went even further, pointing across fifteen of his works and stating that “[a] plural logic of the aporia thus takes shape” (D 1993: 20).³ His works were peppered with references to “logic”, and insistence that he is

very attentive to the difference of ... logic, of rhetoric, protocols and argumentation.

(D 1996b: 79)

But even now, at the close of this decade, to our knowledge, a “logic” of this scale remains to be put forward. Assuming that Derrida is not lying and that there is a “plural logic” – let us define this simply as a systematic arrangement of thought which can be regular, and predictive⁴ – this seems to be an attractive task. Andrea Hurst's system is a recent beginning, and this article thus begins here. Hurst claims that

a formalisable logic repeats its play *in every Derridean text*

(H 2008b: 76; my italics)

and that this has been found, rigorously.

This article would prefer not to conclude this. It is easy to note, from an outside perspective, that Hurst's work samples only a few texts. In *Aporias*, though Derrida points to fifteen works where the “plural logic” takes shape

2. Cf. Gasché (1986); Harvey (1986); Llewellyn (1986). The first two provide readings of Derrida through Hegel, Heidegger and Husserl, the latter through Frege, Wittgenstein, Quine and Goodman. See Caputo (1987) for a summary, and Sprinker (1986: 1226-1242) for a critique of Gasché. Later readers are more comfortable with suggestions of rigour (for Bennington, Derrida's thinking on politics is “a rigorous consequence of ... *différance*” (2001: 202)), without impeding the relation to literature (cf. Hillis Miller (2001: 58-81)). Hurst herself points, without reference, to Bennington, Gasché, Culler and Caputo (H 2004: 244).

3. All references to Derrida are indicated by D [date]: [page(s)].

4. Or as Derrida says of *différance*, an arrangement of thought which “produces systematic and regulated transformations which are able, at a certain point, to leave room for a structural science” (D 1972: 28). The question is where this certain point is.

(D 1993a: 13-16), twelve are not included in Hurst's reasoning, which the reader may follow in this footnote.⁵ But caveats in place, this is neither a review article, nor a contextualisation. Hurst claims rigour, thus the system must be worked through from the inside, without obfuscation. What is in question is what can be said positively of Derrida.

That said, does the word "logic" herald Rorty's (1991: 128) warning of the inevitable pinning-down of Derrida? Evidently, Derrida is willing to risk this, so let us reserve judgement. The question then arises as to which "logic" to use – for this can become rigorous indeed. Hurst uses basic noncontradiction, which appears to be a good starting-place, as Derrida dwells on it (cf. D 1976: 61,128; 1993: 16; 2002: 274, 233, 263, 268, 273). As a result, only *simple* propositional "logic", using the basic axioms (noncontradiction, identity and excluded middle) will be tested. In truth, I set out only critical reasoning. How this might develop, if it does, remains to be seen.⁶

To begin, Hurst equates Derrida with the "language game of logic":

I wish to state categorically and clearly that Derrida's thinking, in my view, does not aim to contradict the age-old tradition of formal logic.

(H 2004: 246, also 2008b: 9)

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5. Derrida points to "Ousia and Gramme: "Note on a Note" from *Being and Time*, "Donner la Mort", "Tympan", "Fors", *Mémoires for Paul de Man*, *Parages*, *Schibboleth*, "Signature, Event, Context", *Du Droit à la philosophie*, *The Other Heading*, "Passions", *Glas, Limited Inc.*, *Psyché: Inventions de l'autre*, and *Donner le temps*, published in English as *Given Time: Counterfeit Money*. In Hurst's article of 2004, which sets out the plural logic in the most depth, Hurst points only to the last two, and only the last features heavily in the analysis of the gift. In the book of 2008, only the last four are mentioned, and *Given Time* is the only featured work in the chapter on Derrida's plural logic (2008b: 107-111). The article of 2008, which applies the plural logic to the question of Derrida's political relevance (repeated in the book (2008b: 78-94), mentions none of them. Instead, in the system explained below, Hurst in general takes the notions of the lack of presence and substitution of signs from "Speech and Phenomena" and "Différance"; those of "spacing" and "temporising" from "Différance" and *Of Grammatology*; the "centre" from "Structure, Sign and Play"; economy and aneconomy from *Archive Fever*; the aporias of justice and law from "Force of Law"; the aporia of the gift from *Given Time*, and the Venn-like system of three aporias from *Aporias*. References for these works may be found in Bennington (1993).
6. Elsewhere, I have suggested an early basis – not yet a "logic" – to help find a common platform for reading Derrida, via his earliest work on Husserl ("Finding a Systematic Base for Derrida", *Forum Philosophicum*, 15, Fall, pp. 275-300).

Taking Derrida at his word that the plural logic has a “formalisable regularity” (D 1993: 13), Hurst relays Derrida’s “aporia” symbolically:

If p , then q , and if not- p then r (where both q and r ... are unsatisfactory), but either p or not- p , Either q or r .

(H 2008b: 9, 2004: 246)

Roughly: if p is chosen, one unsatisfactory option follows, if not- p , another unsatisfactory option; p or not- p must be chosen, thus there is unsatisfactory outcome. Hurst does not further this symbolisation; instead, an informal system is laid out, which is applied to the question of Derrida’s political relevance.

To that end, in my opinion Hurst’s system explained just below is a valuable contribution, although *only* within its range; hence the references to Derrida’s work are this article’s own. However, it should become clear that this system is only a beginning.

Part 1: Hurst’s System

The initial setting is the Kantian/Husserlian tradition (H 2004: 253), which this article supports with a qualification, *différance* having arisen more directly (though not exclusively) in Derrida’s struggle with Husserl, a view which now finds some currency (cf. Hillis Miller 2001: 58-63; Caputo 1987a: 123).⁷ Thus Hurst begins with the Kantian “object=X” (H 2004: 253-254; CPR A8/B12), of which existence is never predicated but which, like Husserl’s object, can always be explicated. Thus an object “will have a future” (H 2004: 264). Put differently, Derrida tells us often that the phenomenon remains “*possible*” (cf. D 1996b: 85), in that one cannot deny

7. This article does so for reasons different from Hurst’s: because Derrida’s first years were spent on these studies. The student essay of 1954 was on Husserl (D 2003), as was his first speech of 1959 (reproduced with amendments as “Genesis and Structure” (D 1978: 154-168)). The rise of Derrida’s published work even in these early years is not exclusively in reaction to Husserl, however: there had been at least one abandoned (unpublished) project on aesthetics and signification, in 1957. Caputo suggests that “it is helpful to see Derrida’s celebrated notion of “*différance*” as a rewritten and more radically critical version of Husserlian constitution” (1987b: 123), although this is gentle: Derrida is critical even of the suggestion that there “is” constitution. Hurst does take account of other thinkers in the book of 2008a, and always noted affinity through Saussure – who, however, is seen in Hurst’s Master’s of 1999 as an extension of Kantian thought.

it is there.⁸ What cannot be denied remains possible. Consequently, it is *impossible* to determine an attribute of a thing in itself.

Thus – as in Kant, and also Husserl – the *phenomenon/thing* binary becomes the template, where the “possible” and “impossible” form the limits:

Différance ensures that the full presence of the “thing itself”, *as the ultimate authority governing any construction*, remains in principle impossible.

(H 2004: 264; my italics)

The absence of full conceptual presence underpins everything.

This creates the motif – common in systematic readings of Derrida – of an internal-external binary:⁹ The possible phenomenon is “internal”, the elusive thing, could it be ascertained, would be “external”. Thus the traditional phenomenological binary opposition – “Is the appearance wholly present or absent?” – is a fool’s choice, as no answer could be finalised either way (H 1999: 10, 2008a: 16; D 1976: 62, 1978: 292-293). But as Derrida makes clear, loss of full presence does not mean absence. One could as little deny the presence as affirm the plenitude of sign, system, concept (cf. H 2004: 245; D 1973: 139). Thus Hurst’s every work begins by opposing the (“poststructural”) readings which insist on such either-or choice and, finding no foundational presence in Derrida, suggest a disgruntled “absolute relativism” in a “freeplay” of signifiers. Rather, Derrida does not accept the offer. Hurst quotes:

to pose the problem in terms of choice, to ... believe oneself obliged to answer ... by a yes or no ... is to confuse very different levels, paths and styles. In the deconstruction of the arche, one does not make a choice.

(H 2004: 249; D 1978: 62; my italics)

This remains Hurst’s fundamental axiom (cf. H 1999: 138, 2004: 244, 249, 2008a: 19, 2008b: 9-10, 36, 74). When Derrida is offered the either/or choice he “refuses to ... choose between them, and prefers “incoherence” as the most rational option” (H 2008a: 19; cf. D 1976: 84).

This will be referred to here as the “core”.

But despite this refusal, a systematic logic unfolds: each concept is thus “contaminated” by both presence and absence (cf. D 1973: 20, 22; 2002: 274). The terms “presence” and “absence” can be as little determined as definitively denied, neither being expelled from the other. Indeed, Derrida tells us that this problem arose from 1954, and asks

8. Cf. in *Of Grammatology*, a phenomenological trace is a “presence-absence” (D 1978: 71).

9. Which, as Caputo points out (1987a: 246), forms the foundation of the works of 1986 (Gasché, Harvey & Llewellyn)

why the very word “contamination” has not stopped imposing itself on me from thence forward.

(D 2003: xv)

Différance would be the systematic interdependence which arises from the “logic of contamination”. This creates a consistent approach that accommodates meaning.

Such meaning, in Husserl’s phenomenology, is built upon a binary of active or passive constitution, in relation with intentionality (cf. Husserl 1960). As this is a phenomenology – concerned with the mind’s a priori spatio-temporal capacities to determine the object – the problem for Derrida becomes how the mind constitutes what is undeniably there. Derrida refuses Husserl’s either-or choice of active and passive constitution in favour of *différance* (H 2008b: 22, 2004: 254; cf. Derrida 2003: 142-144), as well as the inside-outside division between space and time, as constituted a priori or founded externally. Thus, since 1967, Derrida’s two – inseparable – ways that mind constitutes its objects are “spacing” and “temporising” in intentional constitution; they too, however, are “contaminated”. “Spacing” recognises difference, while temporising defers notice of difference (in effect, it allows similarity), although only temporarily, as their interweaving returns the recognition of difference (H 2004: 263, 2008b: 105; Derrida 1973: 68).¹⁰

To explain this process, Hurst’s own touch is to unite *everything* beneath a methodical double movement of *meaningful* and *destructive* moments, via Derrida’s terms “economy” and “aneconomy” (cf. Derrida 1996a: 12). Critchley already noted that Derrida’s reading of texts consists

first, of a patient and scholarly commentary following the main lines of the text’s dominant interpretation, and second, in locating an interruption or alterity within that dominant interpretation.

(Critchley 1992: 30)

Hurst places this within the phenomenological system.

“Economy” – as Hurst uses the word – is the moment *when one builds systems “internally”*. Here the recognition of difference – as in temporising, above – is deferred. Aneconomy is the inevitable moment of recognising the difference in systems – as in spacing, above. Each system differs from absolute meaning (for no concept will ever be fully present). *These are said to apply across all of Derrida’s thinking* (H 2004: 262, cf. 2008b: 95).¹¹

10. One puts “*différance* as spacing out of play, to suspend it in favour of *différance* as temporisation” (H 2004: 263).

11. The early Derrida mainly uses the word “economy” alone (cf. D 1982: 19, 1973: 148-150, 1978: 23), which Hurst does not note (H 2004: 254). As is known, this arises from Derrida’s interaction with Levinas. “Economy” also

Indeed, the economic and aneconomic then swap because they too are contaminated. Hurst illustrates this via Derrida's concept of the "centre" of a system (D 1978: 279-281),¹² a moment of spacing. A centre is *economic* insofar as it permits meaning inside a system, for "the fixed "centre" (or selected constant) ... makes the play of permutations possible". But the centre also constrains the system – for example, Derrida states that a sign always remains "undeconstructible" in that it is a "sign-of", thus prevents relativist freeplay (H: 2008b: 100, 105; D: 1978: 281).

Thus it is partly aneconomic insofar as it limits from the inside. Oppositely, taking an external perspective on a system, aneconomy must maintain something to deem it different, so still "preserve[s] central terms". Thus economy can "constitute different things", while in turn there is something "incoherent" in aneconomy: preserving economy (H 2008b: 105). To relate this to the above – this preservation defers the spaced view of lack of absolute meaning. At the heart of economic constitution is aneconomy, and *inside* (or outside) *that* an economy, etc. The "inside" and "outside" are analogues of the internal and external binary, from which either-or choice is refused.

The overall result of this contamination is an ongoing movement of refusal of choice from either/or binaries – internal-external, temporising-spacing and so on (H 2008b: 77, 102-103, 106-107, 2008a: 12). It is not a Hegelian instability between two poles, as each iteration of a concept retains contamination, thus prevents affirmation. One cannot achieve the Hegelian final resolution of concrete self-determination (H 2008b: 103). Rather, Hurst explains the movement as a thickening "interweaving" (H 2008b: 103). Economy/aneconomy in this movement finds no spaced foundation, yet no resolution in temporising. This is all one system: aneconomy occurs by recognition of lack of presence.

Hence this has a nominal level. Given the inability to sustain a presence, *différance* needs substitutes, thus keeps "taking on various context-specific nicknames" (H 2004: 245-6, cf. 2008b: 75; D 1978: 279, 1982: 43), by which Hurst means unsatisfactory names.¹³ None of these can be protected

means – from *oikos* and *nomos*, the law of the home – the return of thought within interiority, a "movement of the same" (D 1982: 19; cf. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 1969: 227-228). That said, this is part of Hurst's system: a temporary building of movement of thought on the inside, undone by an outside. This is not explained.

12. Cf. also "the theological presence of a centre Whence, for example, the chain of substitutions" (D 1972: 14).
13. For the breaking up of presences into a chain of substitutes, see D (1973: 42, 1993: 12, 98, 1995: 61).

from undoing, resulting in the movement. “Nicknames” substitute onto the internal/external binary, where the “outside” are the undecidables

such as the “reserve”, “archi-writing”, “archi-trace”, “spacing”, “supplement”, “pharmakon”, “hymen”, to which one could add “gift”, “*aporia*”, and so on indefinitely.

(H 2004: 245-246, 2008b: 75; cf. D 1982: 43, 1998: 30)

On the external (impossible) side, Hurst places the thing, gift, difference, justice, infinity, referent, exteriority, otherness, transcendence, ethics, and peace (H 2004: 262, 2008a: 18). The internal (possible) substitutes are determinable meaning, the phenomenon, laws, ethical structures, given, totality, text, interiority, present, sameness, immanence, history, philosophy and war (H 2004: 262, 2008a: 18).

The scale of generalisation is kneewobbling.

Nevertheless – this article will be critical later – Hurst’s axioms have an answer. Substitution occurs in economy by temporarily highlighting the *similarity* above; then aneconomy recognises inevitable nonsynonymity, causing the failure to protect presence, leading again to the movement. A critic might object that this leads to paralysis, for the nonsynonymic shouldn’t be substituted, while unrestrained “similarising” should result in freeplay. But such critique mistakenly proposes an either/or choice. Instead, *contamination provides stability*. Economy is automatically stable but never totally so (for pure stability stifles becoming), while aneconomy still preserves central terms. Even though the extent of any substitute (signifier, concept, presence) is undecidable, its persistence is not. There is stability in every moment of *constitution by substitution*.

Perhaps to avoid terminological confusion, Hurst never mentions that Derrida does allow for presence, for example

[a]n unerasable trace is not a trace, *it is a full presence*, an immobile and uncorruptible substance.

(D 1978: 230; my italics)

This is addressed by the system. A strange presence is not excluded, the trace of presence even in absence by contamination, in a movement of substitution. This is what Derrida calls a “sure play” of signs: “that which is limited to the substitution of given and existing, present pieces” (D 1973: 292). That said, one might raise questions. Thus far the two bases of Hurst’s work seem directly contradictory: if one refuses coherent choice (the “core”), one cannot build the meaningful systems – in reading texts, or creating philosophy or literature – that are claimed for economy. Hurst’s answer is “forgetting” (cf. D 1973: 155-156).¹⁴ It is “necessary to forget *différance* to experience the possible” (H 2004: 264). If one is to proceed in

14. For application of “forgetting” to justice/law see D (2002: 282).

economy, one must forget the obstacle of stubborn nonpresence. However, this can only be temporary, as aneconomy (contamination) means recognition of the lack of full presence, reinveigles itself, so one remembers anamnesically. Then one needs to forget, and so on. “Interweaving” should occur by forgetting and remembering.

This helps to explain Derrida’s comment:

Deconstruction is generally practiced in two ways or two styles, *and it most often grafts one onto the other* [i.e. they are contaminated]. One takes on the demonstrative and apparently ahistorical allure of [aneconomic] *logico-formal paradoxes*. The other, more historical or *more anamnesic* [less forgetful], seems to proceed through [economic] *readings of texts*, meticulous interpretations and genealogies.

(D 2002: 250; my italics; cf. H 2004: 265)¹⁵

It is fair to say the system above is cohesive.

However, this is not yet aporetic. To become a “logic of the aporia”, Hurst distils the later Derrida’s system to the phenomenon-thing binary,¹⁶ via Derrida’s well-known example of the gift (D 1992: 12-16) (justice/law will be explained below).¹⁷ In giving/receiving, as the giver is acknowledged, by self or other, as a beneficent giver, the giver receives in return. Thus not all of a gift is passed on. In turn, the recipient gives recognition, so not all of a gift is received. How could one give? The concept of a “gift” in its pure intention cannot be made present. Hurst frames the issue in phenomenology:

If the gift has to be recognisable in order to be a gift, then the gift is impossible, for the recognition destroys it by converting it to a present. On the other hand, if the gift has to be unrecognisable to be a gift, then the gift is again impossible, for in the lack of recognition there is no gift.

(H 2008b: 108-109)

However, Hurst wishes to place the gift on the internal-external binary, as “possible/impossible”. But – I note – Derrida tells us a gift is *impossible* in both its guises. Hurst’s solution, in 2004, is that there “is” an undeniable given (D 1994: 20-22), in relation to something or someone having given it – a pun on the word “present”. That said, Hurst notes that this affirmation

15. Note, however, the “apparently” and “seems to proceed”. This will be addressed below.

16. Derrida, Hurst says (H 2008b: 95), replaces the early term *différance* with the “plural logic of the aporia”. This is not quite true. Derrida still uses the term (cf. five pages before mentioning the “plural logic” (D 1993: 17), and in *Specters of Marx* (D 1994). Here one should understand Hurst’s project – to draw a path from *différance* in 1967 to Derrida’s work in the 1990s.

17. Derrida put his earliest sorts of aporias forward in 1954 (D 2003: 26).

cannot be protected from aneconomy, leading to substitution. There is thus only the *possibility* of a fixed given. This binary is simplified to “present/gift”. A gift is impossible, a thing. A given is the possible *phenomenon*.

In short, the basic aporia is the classic internal-external problem of knowing the thing itself, integrating the refusal to choose from its either-or (present-absent) option. By this reading, *any* attempt at determination leads to aporia. As Derrida never lets us off the *need* to choose – an axiom that will not be followed here – then aporia, for Hurst, is the situation which follows: an irreducible dilemma between two choices made insoluble by contamination, which would lead to unsatisfactory outcome. Hurst sets this out in the symbolisation, repeated below.

Part 2: Logical Preparation

Now this article turns toward critique. Ironically, although it argues for logic, the system creates a logical problem. For by finding a powerful moment for economy and aneconomy, Hurst has no way to dismiss validity, *other than by its inevitable lack*. This is reflected in Hurst’s approach. “Problems” are placed on the side of economy:

The basis of *economic* différance [is] (system, structure, *problem*
(H 2008b: 100; my italics)

When this occurs, problems wait to be undone by the movement alone.

Again, Kant’s contradiction-based antinomies are omitted, as they are “more closely related to Derrida’s *problema*”, from *Aporias*, which recognizes that one cannot protect a substitute from undoing (H 2008b: 98; D 1993: 11-12). Hurst prefers

aporetic predicaments ... [which] persist after one has circumvented ...
logical ... structural errors.
(H 2008b: 102)

However, one *must* be able to distinguish structural errors independently of economy/aneconomy. If not, one could say anything one likes in economy. One could state the absurd: “A palm tree is pure giving”, undo this aneconomically, and say that is deconstruction. More subtly, as will be seen, one could state: “There is and is not coherence”, wait for it to be undone, and say that is deconstruction. Without a criterion, Hurst *cannot distinguish logical and structural errors from aporia*.

Hurst creates the problem by rejecting “formally contradictory relation”.

The

“wider” [term] contradiction ... conflates distinct discursive forms, *only one* of which, I believe (namely aporia or dilemma), accords with ... Derrida’s thinking”.

(H 2004: 246, 2008b: 390; my italics)¹⁸

Hurst elides *all* of contradiction (“wider contradiction”) to argue for a part (aporia). This creates a resistance to employing the principle of noncontradiction.¹⁹

However, this principle *guides the thinking anyway*. Hurst’s formula is:

If *p*, then *q*, and if *not-p* then *r* (where both *q* and *r*... are unsatisfactory), but either *p* or *not-p*, Either *q* or *r*”.

(H 2008b: 9, 2004: 246; my italics)²⁰

By “either *p* or *not-p*”, Hurst *returns* a choice of an either/or. This is the formulation for the excluded middle. One or other must be true, but both cannot be true. Hurst thus returns the principle of noncontradiction (not both *p* and *not-p*). Secondly, *p* is permanent, an identity (*p* is *p*), and not its absence. Thirdly, that “*q* and *r* are unsatisfactory” imports an outside judgement (they are unacceptable because of nonpresence, contamination and stand-off) which is not contradictory. Thus while focus on economy/aneconomy permits no “criterion” to assess error, subtracting noncontra-

18. Derrida’s logic “rests on the argumentative form of dilemma, paradox, or aporia, rather than that of the strict contrary or contradictory oppositions within which either/or choices still make sense” (H 2008b: 9, 2008a: 21). Again “[f]or Derrida the relation between foundationalism and anti-foundationalism takes the form not of a contradiction, but of a dilemma” (H 2004: 249). “Derrida insists that the relation between ... [the] economic ... and aneconomic ... is not ‘regulated’ by either/or logic, since these do not stand in a formally contradictory relation, but rather in a relation formalised as dilemma” (H 2008a: 21).

19. This is a difficulty, because Hurst’s point at the outset was that Derrida does not aim to contradict the tradition of formal logic, thus he must aim to utilise noncontradiction to avoid this.

20. Can one make the leap in Derrida from the above language to “propositions”, thus statements? Aside from the fact that Hurst does so, a justification is that in “Speech and Phenomena” Derrida explains that the inability to determine full presence in signification can be worked out in propositions (cf. “‘I am immortal’ is an impossible proposition” (D 1973: 54-55, referring to Husserl LI 4 Sec. 14)), while in *Aporias* he uses direct logical formulations (cf. fn. 21, below).

diction, hides its use. *Both error and aporia can appear only as shortfall from absolute truth.*

The need is to develop a criterion which can distinguish contradiction from aporia. To prepare, some necessary but minimal relations for aporia – as Hurst sets them out – need to be clarified. That full presence is not possible is an axiom. Next, presence is also never absent. Thus each concept – as present – *can be opposed* to absence. Absence is the other (the external). Each concept then contains itself and *the other* as undeniable and indeterminable absence, leading to contamination. Then, *recognition* of contamination creates a stand-off (in the “either-or” choice in Hurst’s symbolisation). As one *must choose*, thus “can neither give up on nor come to rest at some equilibrium [choice]” (H 2004: 249), this leads to dilemma (aporia). There is a *sequence* (hereafter, *s*) from nonpresence to aporia. If any are not included, aporia does not follow.

Now, to derive the criterion, noncontradiction can be shown by “not both (*p* and not-*p*)”. *Rejecting* it as a theorem, which opens the way for aporia, leaves the inclusive (*p* and not-*p*); which is one way of setting out contamination. Hurst’s system *in every case* is built on asserting “*p* and not-*p*”: (1) A possible concept is and is not present (is contaminated by absence). (2) The internal/external binary and its substitutes are contaminated. (3) Economy and aneconomy are contaminated, leading to the interweaving movement.

All of the elements of *s* are thus necessary for (*p* and not-*p*) to be aporetic across the system. So by *modus tollens*, the classical and transcendental criterion, to have aporia, *s* must necessarily be implicated when Hurst says “*p* and not-*p*”. Phrased positively:²¹ when aporia is *a*, then:
 $a \rightarrow s, \text{ not-}s \text{ not-}a$ (MT).

It should be noted that (*p* and not-*p*) is the normal formulation of direct contradiction. Not so in this logic, for the instances of nonpresence, contamination and stand-off make aporia a special case of contradiction.²²

21. Hurst notes Derrida’s insistence on the negative form of transcendental conditions “If not-*X*, then not-*Y*” (H 2008b: 77; D 1993: 20). As is known, any positive form runs into problems of presence. However, Hurst uses the positive form. I do so also as this will be placed in provisional relation to a necessary suspension of logic. This can be taken forward if a plural-logic is developed.

22. Note that it is not contradictory for something to be part itself and part its opposite. Contamination is not bound by noncontradiction. Stand-off, however, is. In this regard, Hurst’s formula depends on noncontradiction to work in aporia. Derrida does distinguish between stand-off as being faced with two insoluble limits, and contamination. For example, in “Force of Law” he speaks of “the two limits of this contradiction”, and then notes, “But this figure is also a contamination” (D 2002: 274).

But if an object and its opposite are stated together, *without s*, then “wider contradiction” still remains.

So one can derive:

Aporia: (*p* and not-*p*, and *s*)

Wider contradiction: (*p* and not-*p*, and not-*s*)

Part 3: Critique and Construction

The problems which arise can now be assessed, as Hurst counters Žižek’s view that Derrida is politically irrelevant (H 2008a, 2008b: 78-94). The ground is Derrida’s analysis of the aporias of justice and law (D 2002: 251-258), which Hurst outlines via her system. Firstly, there is a phenomenological binary: law is the undeniable, thus *possible*, aspect of political institutions (H 2004: 264, 2008b: 14, 2008a: 22), while justice is transcendent (incalculable, undecidable, the thing), thus *impossible* to determine. Secondly, there is contamination: justice must “preserve the law”, while one cannot deny that laws permit justice. Thirdly, there is stand-off: a law is without justice insofar as it unjustly ignores the “absolutely unique” (D 2002: 251) aspect of any human situation (H 2008a: 23). Yet to make a “just” decision would mean one is outside the law. Justice is “unavoidably incoherent” (H 2004: 249).²³

Thus to

make the either/or choice (e.g. justice is law, or justice is the suspension of law) is always to have lost the phenomenon (“justice itself”). The phenomenon ... remains ... structurally impossible.

(H 2004: 263, 2008b: 77)

The discussion then takes place via the *Antigone*. The eponymous heroine, Žižek says, chooses “unconditional fidelity” to a Sublime Other (transcendence, justice). This individuality beyond rules requires a pure (“unprincipled”) pragmatism to regulate people. Conversely, Creon chooses a law-bound framework, insensitive to unique human situations. Law alone leads to an ethically static system; justice alone leads to “entropy” (systematic dissolution).

Derrida, Žižek says, “insists on a sharp opposition (... absolute externality and zero contaminating overlap)” between internal and external (H 2008a: 18). Thus, as justice is external and law internal, and choosing either leads

23. Cf. “An efficient legal system, for example, cannot make of ‘justice’ a coherent concept. In fact, for [Derrida], language games have to be played with unavoidably incoherent concepts, such as justice, which, moreover, cannot be replaced with more viable alternatives” (H 2004: 249).

to unacceptable consequences, Derrideans can only be “passive” – in the Levinasian sense – before externality. The familiar charge arises:²⁴ Derrida cannot help find ethical solutions in today’s “dynamic and messy ethical and political reality”.

He is “practically irrelevant” (H 2008b: 14).

Hurst refutes this. Firstly, Žižek clearly proposes an “either-or” choice. Secondly, in analysis of Levinas, Derrida insists on contamination between the internal and external (D 1978: 129, 1999: 98-99). Thirdly, *Hurst ripostes, Derrida has a collapse in the binary which maintains aporia.*

This creates “problems” for Hurst.²⁵

Problems of the System

Hurst re-emphasises the structure in 2008, from Derrida’s *Aporias*, as

three different forms of aporia: namely the economic aporia of “closure” or “totality”, the aneconomic ... “openness” or “infinity”, and the aporia of paradox [impossibility of resolution].

(H 2008b: 9, D 1993: 13)

Aporia arises between “totality” and “infinity” (the internal and external), which are contaminated, but in the tensional relationship (H 2008a: 22) which leads to stand-off. The structures are thus

interdependent in such a way that each holds the other[s] ... both together and apart.

(H 2008a: 22)

That is, Hurst insists that the structure of aporia is *maintained*. This is explained as “represented by three interlinked rings of the kind most commonly associated with Venn diagrams” (H 2008a: 22).

Yet on the same page, when

Žižek argues the ethical act is to be found in a contaminating (if momentary) collapse of the gap between the automaton [for Hurst, internal] and Real [external] ... in his view Derridean discourse disallows this

(H 2008a: 22)

24. As, for example, Habermas (1987: 205), that Derrida “permits the capacity to solve problems to disappear behind the world-creating capacity of language”, and Rorty’s accusation of no “public (pedagogic or political) use” (1989: 125) and “little direct public utility” (1998: 310).

25. The word is used, henceforth, in the technical sense of terms which indicate error but for Hurst are confined to economy.

Hurst asserts that in Derrida collapse *is* achieved.

But in a “collapse”, structures *no longer hold each other together and apart*. This is wider contradiction. To apply the criterion: in collapse, there is no stand-off. Nor is there contamination, for there is neither differing of concepts to be acknowledged as contaminated, nor borders. There is no *s* (derived above), hence there is wider contradiction. Thus when text (totality, phenomenon, immanence, present, etc.) “collapses” into referent (infinity, thing, transcendence, etc.), possibility into impossibility, then the Venn-like interweaving and separation is set aside. Yet Hurst *still* maintains that

Derrida’s entire philosophical career is devoted to working out different versions of a complexity theory that is able to cope with a simultaneous *separation and interweaving* of “text” and “referent” (or whichever of the numerous other names used for this “ontological pair”).

(H 2008a: 12)

Collapse is not simultaneous separation and interweaving.

There are two mechanics here.

Further, collapse means aporia is neutralised. As is known, Derrida would neutralise aporia via the “decision”. But Hurst asserts that *choice is made* with the decision

to be just, one must make a *decision*. But ... the *choice* will not be just, because it ... commits an injustice in ... decid[ing] the undecidable.

(H 2004: 258; my italics)

A choice is a not a decision,²⁶ but accompanies it. Yet Hurst’s fundamental axiom in every work (H 1994: 138-143, 2004: 249, 2008b: 9-10, 36, 401) and three times in this essay, is that choice from absolutes *is not* made for “a choice cannot be made” (H 2008a: 18).

Derrida refuses to think in terms of absolutes, let alone choose between them.

(H 2008a: 19)

But one cannot say that a choice both is and is not made – (*p* and not-*p*) – is aporia, as in a decision none of the elements in *s* hold.

Thus the two mechanics are clarified: *decision and choice contradicts the maxim of refusal of either/or choices* (the earlier “core”). Respectively: an internal/external binary, which *collapses* aporia and makes decision, does not fit an internal/external binary which *maintains* aporia and refuses choice.

At least two binaries appear.

26. Cf. D (1996b: 84, 87)

“Incoherence” emphasises this. Two paragraphs further, Hurst repeats that

Derrida refuses to think in terms of absolutes, *let alone choose between them*, and prefers “*incoherence*” as the most rational option.

(H 2008a: 19; D 1978: 84; my italics)

Here, Derrida does *not* choose (decide), and prefers incoherence. But, Hurst goes on,

[c]oherence is achieved in the collapse between immanence and transcendence, as I shall explain in due course, only at the cost of paralysis or aporia.

(H 2008a: 18-19; my italics)

Not only is choice both *made* and *not made*, coherence both *is* and *is not* achieved. That is: (*p* and not-*p*), without *s*.

The final outcome then settles *against* the possibility that coherence is achieved. Hurst concludes that

[i]t is precisely because *things are ultimately undecidable* – that nothing is either possible or impossible ... – that we are obliged to go through the singularising ordeal of having to make decisions.

(H 2008a: 25; my italics)

Hurst settles on the core. But then there could not have been collapse or coherence.

Hurst wishes to note the difficulties en passant:

Derrida sees both totality (absolute immanence) and infinity (absolute transcendence) as extreme positions *between which a choice cannot be made, or more precisely, sustained*.

(H 2008a: 18; my italics)

The “or more precisely” indicates the difficulty.

Indeed, over nine years, Hurst has never maintained that a choice cannot be sustained. The same article states three times that choice between “extreme positions” is not made *in the first place*.²⁷ It would be easy to suppose that “choice is not made” and “choice is made, but not sustained” is aporetic. The criterion helps: the latter does not maintain *s*. This is wider contradiction.

That said, Hurst means that coherence and choice cannot be sustained because aneconomy overtakes economy. This can now be addressed. While

27. “Derrida refuses to think in terms of absolutes, let alone choose between them” (H 2008a: 19), for “a choice cannot be made” (H 2008a: 18). The “aporetic logic ... makes it necessary to avoid a choice between economic and aneconomic *différance*” (H 2008b: 101; cf. 2008b: 104).

Hurst's symbolisation, and also contamination, (p and not- p), is a static propositional logic, ("it is" and also "is not"), an-/economy adds a temporal – in Derrida, temporised – movement; "it is, then it is not".

One does not need to add temporal logical elements. For if economy builds systems, it is coherent. Thus it chooses. Even should aneconomy take over: if there is economy then coherence *is achieved, temporarily*. By this reasoning, decisions, thus choices *are* made, in economy.

Hurst's system implies that "[t]here is and is not aporia".

Practically, this means *no aporia is "irreducible"* (cf. H 2004: 255). One simply waits for its inevitable undoing. Further, as aporia is set upon the phenomenon-thing binary, *one finds the full presence of the thing – temporarily*. If "economy" is asserted, nonpresence is no longer the ultimate authority (H 2004: 264). Logically: p is present, thus s not achieved.

Alternatively, that aneconomy recreates aporia is not contradictory; however, aneconomy is part of a process. Saying there is "economy/aneconomy" and also "there is aporia" is again not aporetic, as the former does not maintain s .

The overarching method and the core are in wider contradiction.

Hurst wishes "articulation" to be a solution:

In brief outline, [Derrida] argues that all phenomena are constituted by the equally imperative aporias of systematic, economic closure (totality) and non-systematic, aneconomic openness (infinity), *between which it is never a question of choosing, but of articulation (joining, linkage)*.

(H 2008a: 24, my italics; cf. H 2008b: 95, D 1998: 29-30)

Articulation, as Hurst presents it, allows deconstruction without choice. But if articulation is coherent, it contradicts the core. If not, it maintains the core and prevents decisive outcome.

The problem – this article suggests – is that Derrida has at least *two different formations*, for different purposes. The phenomenon/thing template (the "core") *refuses* either/or choice, and maintains aporetic stand-off, insisting on *incoherence*. This stymies naive epistemology. The "decision-formation" is concerned with finding a way around aporia, to allow some kind of *coherence* in a decision and choice, with more evident ethical concerns.

At present, they are in wider contradiction at every point.

The yardstick for this disparity is Hurst's deeming that in the symbolisation for aporia, which sets out the core, the outcomes " q and $r...$ are unsatisfactory". In the decision binary after collapse, an outcome would not be unsatisfactory. Rather, it is *exactly what the decision requires*.

The Problems of Opposition

To that end, one must accept that as Derrida says, the decision is a “madness” (cf. D 1992: 9, 1995: 65, 2002: 255-257), and “forgetting” has not yet been included. Hurst *does not mention either* in the article, preferring to suggest a systematic decisiveness. Thus how this overall *system* stands to Derrida’s work needs to be assessed.

In 1993, Derrida summarises the decision formation via a “double concept of the border”:

[T]he *decision* concerns *the choice* between the relation to an other who is *its* other (that is to say, an other that *can be opposed in a couple*) and the relation to a *wholly, non-opposable other*.

(D 1993: 18; my italics)

A fortiori: a “double border” is concerned with interaction between oppositions and non-oppositions. Hurst makes everything oppositional alone (this will also mean “in wider contradiction”).

To explain, let provisional (and unsustainable) divisions be accepted amongst Hurst’s “ontology” (most simply, an object that can be thought as possible), logic (propositional reasoning), and system (Hurst’s plural logic).

First, in *ontology*, Hurst bases everything, from the phenomenon-thing to justice-law to the formidable array of substitutes, upon concepts which can be *opposed*.²⁸ Secondly, the internal-external binary’s own existence is never doubted. But in a double border, the “ontological pair” (H 2008a: 15) may not even be an opposition.

Third, in *logic*, Hurst makes everything oppositional, thus asserts absolutely.

Indeed, there was a problem from the first. Hurst’s internal-external binary deals with possibility and impossibility. These are part of the separate tradition of *modal* logic. But Hurst’s symbolisation is in the tradition of basic *propositional* logic, thus requires true/false values. Hurst requires “either *p* or not-*p*” to be true or false, when they should be possible or impossible.

There was always going to be conflict.

What follows thus needs to be more carefully situated. A proposition as Hurst symbolises it takes the form “It is true/false that *x* is *y*”. This has at least four elements. First, “affirmation” will be explained as judging of the values “true/false”. Second, “assertion” will be taken as predicating “Is/Is not”. Thirdly, the “subject” is *x* (an “ontological” phenomenon in the internal/external binary), and *y* is the predicate (attribute, as determinable or not). *Each, it can be seen, is oppositional.*

28. For example, “‘text’ and ‘referent’ (or whichever of the numerous other names used for this ‘ontological pair’)” (H 2008a: 12).

Now, Hurst's conclusion, above, was that

things *are ultimately* undecidable.

(H 2008a: 25; my italics)

This is the "assertion, declaration, affirmation" (D 1997: 46), of which Derrida warns (below). For strangely, even *undecidability* cannot be *affirmed*. In a logic which – axiomatically – cannot definitely determine something of a thing, *denial of decidability is still affirmation*, as "false", of an assertion "It is" (oppositely, in affirming undecidability one asserts something "Is not" as "true").

Further, nor should "things" – which are impossible – be affirmed as "ultimate". By doing so, Hurst turns impossibility into a *predicate*, making it oppositional (present against absence).

Hurst makes this clear:

[N]othing is either possible or impossible ...

(H 2008a: 25; my italics)

Again, one ought not to affirm anything of the subject "nothing". Further, *one cannot assert anything concrete of the predicate "possible"*. Truth can say nothing about possibility, because the latter remains only possible. Derrida made this point first in 1954:

[The] possible is not a predicate of the actual ...

(D 2003: 110)²⁹

In Hurst, the subjects "possibility/impossibility" are *affirmed* as actually true/false, and asserted as the predicative "Is/Is not". Hurst thus requires them to *mean* absolutely true or false. Derrida, however,

question[s] the unity of sense and word in the "is" – which de jure could have assured the incorporation of all language into *theoretical predication* only by already having teleologically destined all sense [the possible predicate] *to meaning*.

(D 1973: 127; my italics)

Hurst never questions this de jure power to assert meaning.

Instead, even possibility and impossibility are asserted absolutely.

Fourth, opposition forms the fundament of the *system*. Economy and aneconomy "are" the movement "beneath which *all* of Derrida's thinking works" (H 2004: 262, cf. 2008b: 95; my italics). They are absolutely asserted, *not even merely possible*. Thus when Hurst states that economy and aneconomy

29. He does so in analysis of Husserl's logic in *Experience and Judgment*.

remain in irreducible, aporetic, tension with one another, leaving us caught in a dilemma or double bind for which there is no remedy

(H 2004: 255)

then this is only a single bind: *one cannot choose, in a guaranteed oscillation*. Hurst's basis for all of deconstruction *maintains the (oppositional) either-or choice*, which Derrida fundamentally rejects, as *ultimate foundation*.

Fifth, as Hurst's system is interwoven, this impacts on each element. "Contamination", which permits switching between economy and aneconomy, was demonstrated via the "centre". But in a centre, an outside still preserves – *affirms* – central terms (H 2008b: 105).

As a result, each of these five interactions posits full presence of (p and not- p), without s . Each creates wider contradiction instead of aporia; and each does so in relation to the other four. Finally when all of these elements are propositional, and oppositional, there could be no *interaction* with "forgetting". Treating Derrida as oppositional alone means every element, in the system, *does not work*.

Toward Solution – Perhaps and Suspension

Derrida, it seems, must be doing something else. To integrate the sections above: I now ask how "wider contradiction", and (some) pitfalls of the propositional approach could be addressed, in a way that fits the "double border". I do so by reassessing the relation of the "core" and decision formation.

Here the "perhaps" (D 1997: 46, below) becomes important. To preserve the *telos* of a decisive Derrida, Hurst always needed to argue for positive *structures*. Thus Hurst implies there *is* a decision. To allow an equation with Lacan

both [Derrida and Lacan] emphasise that the moment of decision is fleeting.
(H 2008a: 24, 2008b: 93)

Derrida, however, says the decision only *would* be fleeting, were there definitely one. It is the "fleetingness" not of worldly brevity, but of trace.³⁰ Hurst insists there *was* a moment of decision:

30. That is,

once the test and ordeal of the undecidable has passed (if that is possible, but this possibility is not pure, it is never like any other possibility: the memory of the undecidability must keep a living trace that forever marks a decision as such).

(D 2002: 253)

[s]ubsequent to the moment of decision, [one must] face again the aporia of inertia that the moment of decision served to disrupt.

(H 2008a: 24)

Derrida rather says:

Once the test and ordeal of the undecidable has passed (*if that is possible ...*).

(D 2002: 253; my italics)

Again and again, Derrida emphasises: “the decision, *if there is such a thing*” (D 2002: 253, 1996: 84). Indeed, the decision is “a suspended relation” for

[w]ho will ever be able to assure and ensure that a decision as such has taken place ...?

(D 2002: 253)

Derrida does not assert that there *is* (or is *not*) a decision as this would posit presence. *Indeed, reading “Force of Law” shows that nowhere does Derrida state a decision is taken.*

Rather, there “will never be a decision” because then one “would have already known” (1999b: 284). There may *never have been* a decision. Finally, as collapse occurs in a decision, *there may never have been “collapse” or coherence.*

*A double border in the mode of the “perhaps” would settle each of Hurst’s (p and not-p) problems above. Instead of saying Venn-like aporetic stand-off does exist, then collapsed (Hurst’s ontological presentation of (p and not-p)), such elements would be in (some sort of) relation with the recognition that there only might have been a binary at all. Instead of saying “coherence is and is not achieved” (the asserted presentation of (p and not-p), and “there is a decision”, this would be in some relation to never having been either – without denying them. If opposition may never have existed, thus never collapsed, *there would be no conflict – point by point* – between any elements of the core and the decision formation. To wit – the core maintains aporia and incoherence, avoiding choice, and the decision formation would neutralise aporia and coherence, and allow choice. *Thus the core would be in the “mode” of opposition, and a decision formation, if there is one, in the mode of non-opposition.**

But this does not impede the system, for it does not mean the oppositional moments are denied. The axiom of non-presence could remain the ultimate logical authority – when there is opposition. While in suspension, anomie has not been reintroduced, for even if there was no decision, this does not preclude its possibility:

Even if I believe myself to have taken a decision, I do not know if I have taken a decision, but it is necessary that I refer myself to the possibility of this decision.

(D 1996b: 87)

But this is not a *simple* possibility, as a predicate, to be asserted or affirmed for some “predestined teleology” (D 1973: 127, above). Possibility resists even assertion of possibility.

Thus one should not suppose that this is not rigorous. As Derrida asks, quoting Gasché, who asks in turn, the question which is “of utmost interest”:

“And what if perhaps modalised a discourse which no longer proceeds by statements (*declarations, affirmations, assertions*) without being for all that less rigorous than the discourse of [standard] philosophy?”

(D 1997: 46; Gasché 1993: 469; my italics)

That said, this rigour remains to be set out in future work.

However, as a first step, it must be noted that if “possibility” is not the basic modal kind, which still takes the form of “It is possible/impossible”, then simple modal logic is not enough.

“Perhaps” would be a kind of relation to suspension.

As a result, one needs to move beyond logic to reintroduce “forgetting”. *This fits the “madness” which Derrida emphasises in decision-making*, as relations – perhaps – beyond conscious opposition. The decision

is a madness: it preserves something passive, even unconscious.

(D 2002: 255)

But this would also be a forgetting, for speaking of the decision (D 1992: 9), Derrida adds:

[T]his madness, let us recall, would also be that of a forgetting, of a given and desired forgetting.

(D 1992: 35)

Although work still needs to be done here, all the ways which pertain to neutralising aporia – to not being sure if there were a decision, collapse, coherence – as *non-opposition*, broadly fit the second formation.

If so, *Derrida’s logic would no longer be contradictory*. Contradiction remains a factor in an oppositional moment; however, in a suspension there would be no (*p* and not-*p*) to contradict. However, the law of noncontradiction would not be excluded, even in forgetting. When there is or may be opposition, one must retain the law to recognise aporia; while in forgetting, it still needs to apply. Else there would be nothing to proceed by when one forgets, nor a way to recognise aneconomy and remember aporia.

Thus, as this article set out to do, logical approach has allowed recognition of structural errors, the law of noncontradiction is retained – thus far – and space retained for aporias. However, as will be seen, the law must now be made to fail.

Conclusion

Before I do so, I will apply the reasoning. Hurst counters Žižek's either-or charge of irrelevance by taking exactly the opposite either-or side (which violates every axiom):

[W]e are obliged to go through the singularising ordeal of the trauma of undecidability, of having to make decisions The lesson of deconstruction, then, amounts to the injunction to risk making determinate proposals, fabrications, institutions ... that appropriate the [outside] to the best of their power.

(H 2008a: 24)

In these injunctions, Hurst still wishes to *deny decidable outcome*, but *affirm* at least the *possibility of decidable outcome*, and preserve a plural logic, and the oppositional outside to do so.

Derrida, instead, suggests a “hyper-politicisation”:

The fact that deconstruction is *apparently* politically neutral allows, on the one hand, a reflection on the nature of the political, and on the other hand, and this is what interests me in deconstruction, a *hyper-politicisation*.

(D 1996b: 85; my italics)

Note, immediately, the “apparently”. *Derrida does not even assert neutrality*. Here one applies the double border. Firstly: suggesting that Derrida *possibly* has political effect takes the form “It is/Is not”. Secondly, insofar as the oppositional *structures* may not even have existed, then not even possibility or impossibility may be relied upon to be generated. Undecidability may not be produced. Thus one should not attempt to protect opposition, decision, a plural logic itself, to guarantee an outcome. If so, the aporia “*is*” *not a stand-off as to whether there is direct effect, but that one should not answer even its possibility*. But – which has followed from the first axioms – this does not *deny* its possibility, or impede thinking about it.

Thus instead of “risking” Hurst's “determinate proposals” (assertions), a “hyperpoliticisation” would open this *suspended* space, if there is one – between opposition and non-opposition, separate from logical assertion and the either-or binary of political effect – which

permits us to think the political ... by granting us the space necessary in order not to be enclosed in the latter.

(D 1996b: 85)

This is only a beginning, but it has followed closely from the reasoning and texts, and it is hoped that it contributes to the debate.

How, then, would one proceed toward such a “logic”? Hurst's symbolisation is preliminary – none of the internal-external binary (p and not- p)

interactions, nor an-/economy appears. The latter backgrounds the clue that this formula does *not allow* logic to fail. To wit, while aporia should problematise identity, Hurst's symbolisation protects it permanently. It can now be seen that an-/economy does not undo this, as it oscillates *only between assertion and negation*. Even temporised, Hurst's symbolisation preserves either-or choice, noncontradiction, identity and presence *in infinitum*. It is not clear, then, how Derrida would use these classical axioms.

In *Aporias*, Derrida does write that antinomies "impose" themselves "to a certain point", as "*contradictions ... were at stake*" (D 1993: 16; my italics). For Kant, antinomy describes two contradictory propositions, both true.³¹ For Hurst, antinomy describes two propositions (*p* and not-*p*), both *never true*. For Derrida, contradiction holds in static opposition, but at some point the latter needs to fall away. But *nowhere* above is there yet a way to cross to suspension. How, for Derrida, does logic fail? Could this be shown?

That said, philosophical dentistry – extracting one approach – would dismiss six decades of "literary" diversity. But it is already clear that the project of finding a plural logic is just beginning; without guarantee. Rorty's warning need not be conceded yet. Thus when Derrida tells us that he has a plural logic, perhaps it is time to hear him.

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31. cf. CPR A425/B353 ff.

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