



THE LAST POST? POST-POSTMODERNISM AND THE LINGUISTIC U-TURN

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ABSTRACT. This paper adopts an autobiographical tone to review the linguistic turn and its demise at the hands Richard Rorty, along with Continental philosophers like Lyotard rescued us from a philosophical delusion that we might achieve a neutral analysis resulting in linguistic and conceptual hygiene. This view became the basis of a highly influential doctrine in philosophy of education during the 1970s under R. S. Peters and the London school. I review the Wittgenstein-inspired movement and its conceptual affinities with postpositivism, postmodernism and postcoloniality as the dominating motifs of the age we have now passed beyond.

Keywords: linguistic turn, postmodernism, philosophy of education

1. Introduction: The Ends of History

I remember the intellectual excitement when I first discovered Jean-François Lyotard's (1984) *The Postmodern Condition*. I read the book the year it was translated into English while finishing a PhD in philosophy of education on Ludwig Wittgenstein with a thesis entitled 'The problem of rationality.' Earlier after completing an MA in philosophy at the University of Auckland I had been warned off the late Wittgenstein as too 'unphilosophical'. The early Wittgenstein was fine but the later Wittgenstein evidently was not. I persisted in my own philosophical tastes and preferences and eventually found a philosopher of education, Jim Marshall, who was willing to supervise my work on Wittgenstein, which initially focused on the question of cultural relativism.

Lyotard's reading of Wittgenstein while playful, imaginative and a 'creative misappropriation', as I have argued (Peters, 1999), nonetheless struck me as a thunderbolt from the blue. It provided a political interpretation of

Wittgenstein's philosophy of language that I thought both necessary and warranted. I translated for myself into bad English his essay 'Wittgenstein "After"' (Lyotard, 1993) about the 'mourning' of the loss of language that I found insightful and that helped to historically locate Wittgenstein's attempt to deal with the problem of nihilism that is strongly influenced and pre-figured in Nietzsche.

At that very moment I became 'poststructuralist' in my interests and 'postmodern' in my sensibilities, finding ways to reinterpret Wittgenstein in the light of a broadly postmodernist canvas – both the content and structure of his thought, especially the *Investigations*, and also his *style* of philosophizing (Peters & Marshall, 1999; Peters, Burbules, & Smeyers, 2010). This was I now realize a process of fictionalizing the past, a kind of creative historiography of philosophy that grew out of the postmodern emphasis on language and the crafting of historical narrative. My postmodernist reading of Wittgenstein was assisted enormously not only by Lyotard's influential adaptation of 'language-games' as a method in *The Postmodern Condition* but also by the early account of Alan Janik and Stephen Toulmin (1972) of Wittgenstein in terms of Viennese modernism. These texts were not based on close or accurate readings of Wittgenstein but they were inspired speculations that led to new horizons and applications.

I was enabled through this new awareness of textuality – new forms of reading and writing the text, hypertextuality, metatextuality – that gelled with both philosophical hermeneutics and also with at least one significant direction that post-analytical philosophy took with Richard Rorty after the 'death' of Kantian-styled analysis. Rorty's linguistic turn had finally collapsed into a kind of philosophical hermeneutics he called 'conversation' that was in reality a combination of Michael Oakeshott's emphasis on liberal learning and Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. In philosophy it represented a move away from epistemology-centered philosophy and forms of foundationalism and representationalism. Its popularization in philosophy led to the slow decline of analysis as a form of conceptual analysis or conceptual clarification. The latter view of philosophy as clarification does hold a place in Wittgenstein's thought but nothing like the obsession with a magical method and 'linguistic hygiene' that characterized the depiction of Wittgenstein proposed by R. S. Peters of the London School, which had taken the linguistic turn. As philosophers of education R. S. Peters and the London School argued that 'we' philosophers had the metalinguistic task of clarifying our concepts and thoughts, making sure that teachers, policy practitioners and educational researchers had 'clean' and well-ordered concepts to go about their business with. It's a view that does find some echoes in Wittgenstein, perhaps less in the later than in the early Wittgenstein, but quickly became doctrinaire and ideologically dangerous because it was asso-

ciated with the view both in philosophy and philosophy of education that this was/is the only true description of philosophy – a meta-activity that made sure our concepts and language was in order, or a form of analysis that depicted our conceptual schema.

The linguistic turn was an unassailable and wholesale sea-change in twentieth-century philosophy that captured two fundamental insights: the claim that all knowledge is dependent upon its expression in language (all thought is language-dependent) – as Wittgenstein suggested ‘what can be said can be said clearly’ and ‘that we cannot speak of we must pass over in silence’ – and the goal of philosophy is to provide an understanding of our conceptual schema in order to resolve problems that arise from the misuse of words. This is not an investigation of the world but rather a step removed – a meta-activity that seeks agreement to resolve conceptual confusions that arise in our use of concepts. ‘The linguistic turn’ was a phrase popularized by Richard Rorty in 1967 with a collection of the same title – *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method*. He adopted the term from the Austrian philosopher Gustav Bergmann. The notion of ‘the linguistic turn’ while originally used to describe the rising influence of logical positivism, especially the work of Rudolf Carnap and others, Wittgenstein-inspired phases in the history of analytic philosophy also came to represent and provide a description for a range of very different intellectual movements that for want of better descriptors I have christened *postpositivism*, *postmodernism*, *poststructuralism* and *postcolonialism* – four compassing but very different intellectual movements dominating the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in science and the humanities. Wittgenstein helped inaugurate and in part was responsible for the linguistic turn in its various phases of the history of analytical philosophy and I have argued that he demonstrated certain affinities with themes of the other three movements. He was also, and partly, as a consequence of the linguistic turn, responsible for inspiring the cultural turn and the associated turn to practice and space that presently characterizes the social sciences.

This personal intellectual trajectory that mirrors developments and movements in theory in part accounts for why I wrote a book called *The Last Book on Postmodernism* (Peters, 2011). The title for me echoes Nietzsche’s ‘last man’ and the kind of eschatology that goes with much postmodern thinking: the end of history, the end, of ideology, the end of philosophy etc. As an ironical title I wanted to clearly signal that we are now in an era removed from these movements; that these movements while significant and powerful in shaping our sensibilities and understandings have passed their peak and are now waning, even if their interests and effects will continue to be felt widely in the arts, humanities, and social science for many years to come. Also I have to say that this was *my* last book on postmodernism/post-

structuralism. I do not have anything more to say about the topic – some might argue that I have already said too much. Now I want to move on with this intellectual heritage as a basis for approaching new geopolitical and philosophical questions no longer in the shadow of the ubiquitous ‘post’ – essentially a negative and reactive rhetorical strategy – but in the light of the ‘inter’– ‘intercommunication’, ‘interculturalism’, ‘Internet.’

2. The Linguistic Turn: Ideal and Oxford Language Philosophy

In *The Linguistic Turn* Richard Rorty (1967) wrote of the metaphysical difficulties of linguistic philosophy associated with the thought of Wittgenstein and that led to the revolutionary attempt to turn philosophy into a science through the adoption of a new ‘presuppositionless’ method. By ‘linguistic philosophy’ Rorty (1967) meant the ‘view that philosophical problems are problems that can be solved (or dissolved) either by reforming language, or by understanding more about the language we presently use’ (p. 3). This revolution like others in the history of philosophy has been inspired by the search for a neutral standpoint that rested on the understanding that philosophical questions are questions of language – the metaphilosophical presupposition that united both ideal language philosophy (ILP) and ordinary language philosophy (OLP). The thrust of Rorty’s argument developed further in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979) was that there are no criteria or test for successful analysis in either ILP or OLP.

Rorty offered detailed and technical arguments that need not detain us here. The original collection of *The Linguistic Turn* included 28 essays by prominent analytical philosophers including classic statements on the notion that philosophical questions are questions of language, sections devoted to statements concerning ILP and OLP, and a final section on the future of analytic philosophy. The 1992 edition included also two essays by Rorty reflecting on the original collection ten and twenty five years later. Writing in 1990 reflecting on the original essay written in 1965 he comments that the assertion ‘the problems of philosophical are problems of language’ seems confused on two counts: first, philosophy no longer is an ‘activity’ for him and second, there is ‘no such thing as language in any sense which makes it possible to speak of “problems of language”’ (p. 371). He refers to Donald Davidson’s (1975) paper ‘On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme’ that gives up on the dualism between scheme and world and therefore also on the concept of representations about which post-Kantian philosophers were concerned to find out what made them true or false. No longer can we hold that analytical philosophy is born out of a linguistic turn establishing the study of language as the foundation of the discipline.

P. M. S. Hacker (2005) provides a more elaborate picture of the history of analytic philosophy. He suggests it ‘originated in Cambridge in the late 1890s with the revolt, by the young Moore and Russell, against the neo-Hegelian Absolute Idealism that had dominated British philosophy in the last third of the nineteenth century’ (p. 1) and describes Wittgenstein’s logical atomism of the *Tractatus* as the culmination of the first phase and the primary source of the next two phases that he gives as Cambridge philosophy of the 1920s and 1930s under Ramsey, Braithwaite and Wisdom, and the logical empiricism of the Vienna Circle. The second phase was short-lived and the third, with a focus on the logic of scientific language, was interrupted by the Nazis. The leading members of the Circle including Carnap, Feigl, Reichenbach, Hempel, Frank, Tarski, Bergmann, Gödel, ‘fled to the USA, where they played a major role in the post-war years in transforming American pragmatism into logical pragmatism’ (p. 2).

Hacker (2005) suggests that the fourth phase was OLP led by Ryle and Austin, ‘with Berlin, Hampshire, Hart, Grice, and after 1959, Ayer (influenced by the Vienna Circle), and among the postwar generation Strawson and Hare’ (p. 3). Interwoven with postwar Oxford philosophy was a strand based on the *Investigations* including the work of von Wright, Wisdom and Anscombe. The fourth phase, Hacker suggests declined in the 1970s and gave way to American logical pragmatism in the work of Quine, Davidson, Putnam and (in Britain) Dummett.

In making this assessment Hacker (2005) like Rorty looking back acknowledges that there is a great deal of confusion over what constitutes the linguistic turn. He writes:

Rorty sensed, rightly I think, that a deep and important change had occurred in analytic philosophy in the 1930s and 1940s – a shift in the conception of the problems and methods of philosophy that to some extent bridged the gulf that separated the Vienna Circle and affiliates (with all the differences there were between the Schlick/Waismann wing, on the one hand, and the Neurath/Carnap wing, on the other) from Oxford philosophers and affiliates and followers of Wittgenstein (with all the differences between *them*). Despite these great differences both within and between these two streams, a sea-change had occurred (p. 10).

Hacker goes on to state:

With the benefit of another thirty eight years’ hindsight, I myself should wish to elaborate Rorty’s account. The linguistic turn, I suggest, was taken when it was proposed

1. That the goal of philosophy is (a) the understanding of the structure and articulations of our conceptual scheme, and (b) the resolution of the problems of philosophy (to be specified by paradigmatic examples), which stem, *inter alia*, from unclarity about the uses of words, from covert misuses, and from misleading surface grammatical analogies in natural languages.
2. That a primary method of philosophy is the examination of the uses of words in order to disentangle conceptual confusions.
3. That philosophy is not a contribution to human knowledge about reality, either superior to or on the same level as scientific knowledge, but a contribution to a distinctive form of understanding.

This turn had been initiated by Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. It could be completed only when the metaphysical doctrines of the *Tractatus* were jettisoned and the logical doctrines accordingly modified. This was effected by Wittgenstein himself in the 1930s, and, partly under his influence, by the Vienna Circle (p. 11).

At the same time Hacker acknowledges Dummett's (1978, 458) view and then disagrees with each of his propositions of characterization. Dummett's statement here is important because it typifies, even if wrongly, the fundamental attitude of the era that saw philosophy's main task as analyzing the structure of thought via language.

Only with Frege was the proper object of philosophy finally established: namely that the goal of philosophy is the analysis of the structure of *thought*; secondly that the study of *thought* is to be sharply distinguished from the study of the psychological process of *thinking*; and, finally, that the only proper method for analyzing thought consists in the analysis of *language*. ... The acceptance of these three tenets is common to the entire analytic school.

Hacker then also portrays Williamson as arguing that the representational turn has displaced the linguistic turn in that both thought and language are part of the more general category of representation and the analysis of representation ought to be the goal of philosophy as they are both manifestations of mind, and against Williamson Hacker, invoking Kant, maintains that philosophy is the proper understanding of the structure of our conceptual structure.

The culmination of a historicist movement in philosophy of science that began to impact on crude forms of empiricism: Quine's 'two dogmas of empiricism'; Popper's critical rationalism; Feyerabend's epistemological anarchy in *Against Method*; and Kuhn's sociology of science that opened the flood gates (even if he protested against the radical interpretation of his

work), to cultural studies of science, the anthropology of the laboratory, the strong Wittgensteinian program with Bloor and others at Edinburgh. Positivism was on skid row and post-positivism began its unsteady rise to paradigmatic status, even if its intellectual status was short-lived and its practices that were quickly institutionalized outlived their intellectual usefulness as they began to be cemented into an acceptable consensus. Post-positivism was soon challenged by postmodernism in its different forms, including poststructuralism. Postpositivist philosophers of education had difficulty in particular accepting the challenge of the concept of power as it came down to them in the form of Foucault's 'power/knowledge' and later concept of 'governmentality.' The debates concerning methodology after Foucault soon became entrenched – scholars took sides, polemics ensued and open intellectual debate was stultified. In some ways this was a repeat of the history of the debate that took place between Habermas and Lyotard, Foucault and Derrida.

Yet, the development of an ethos of flexibility to a textual approach to the past to me seemed liberating. The Cambridge interpretation of Wittgenstein, that became a place-holder in the history of contemporary philosophy, did not seem possible or palatable any longer, even though there are Cambridgean influences, continuities and overlaps. The black cat of rhetoric had been let out of the bag of factual empirical history and there was no going back. Even if the past is all that is the case, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, unvarnished facts by themselves did not provide the framework of intelligibility for establishing an unambiguous narrative – if facts are theory-laden and multiple narratives can be made to square with the facts then any view of scientific history was let off the hook and the openness of the past became permanently established. History, historiography, metahistory of everything including philosophy seemingly reduced everything to a text and narrative.

Wittgenstein's antifoundationalism and antirepresentationalism in philosophy of language and epistemology seems only to make sense against early modernism in philosophy based on the Cartesian search for certainty that the later Wittgenstein rallied against. The anticartesian reading of Wittgenstein's *Investigation* and *On Certainty* is now well established with his attack on essentialism and the attempt to give firm foundations to knowledge through the strategy of subjectivity and focus on the lonely 'cogito.' His style of Lichtenbergian composition based on notebooks that recorded flashes of insight as 'raw data' to be 'composed' (musically or operatically – with many voices) later and his use of metaphor and narrative rather than systematic argumentation still only resonate for me against the background of formal experimentation that characterizes the high point of literary or poetic modernism with its beginnings in the historical moment of Russian formalism and its extension by means of the European avant-garde.

3. Structuralism, Post-structuralism and Post-poststructuralism

For me the accidental discovery of Lyotard was accompanied by a reading of Althusser, as was ritualistically demanded as part of critical culture in the 1970s' Western university especially by my neo-Marxist colleagues. Actually I enjoyed Althusser's emphasis of 'reading' and interpreting Marx, although I had difficulty with the view that there was one correct reading on the argument that if one can establish new readings then the process of interpretation must be endless especially with rich and complex texts and thinkers (like Marx) that permit and encourage multiple readings. With Althusser, and with many others of like mind I went on to rediscover the canon that comprises structuralist linguistics and poetics focusing on Roman Jakobson's circle, Bakhtin's circle, structuralist anthropology centered on Claude Levi-Strauss, structuralist epistemology based on Gaston Bachelard, Michel Foucault and others, including neo-Kantians, such as Konrad Lorenz and Jean Piaget as well as the Kantian constructivists in philosophy of mathematics such as the Burbaki group. The process was also motivated by the attempt to come to terms with 'poststructuralism' in the very different works of Jean-François Lyotard, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida and the coterie of French feminist structuralists like Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous and others. This reading progression demanded as well the reading of predecessors, Nietzsche and Heidegger in particular, and a study of the Heidegger-Nietzsche nexus that assumed such significance in French thought during the 1960s with the first Nietzsche conferences led by Gilles Deleuze in the early 1960s.

The later Heidegger's philosophy of language that finds its phenomenological roots is not in the structure of *Dasein* but in the original clearing into which *Dasein* is already thrown. In a strong sense Heidegger and Wittgenstein are the instigators of the linguistic turn – Wittgenstein for analytic and post-analytic philosophy, Heidegger for Continental philosophy (and especially phenomenology and hermeneutics) – a turn which is for both symptomatic of philosophy's failure to come to terms with itself. Karl-Otto Apel (1979) and Katherine Rudolph (2006) attempt to show that the 'turn' to language in the twentieth century is governed in both traditions by an Augustinian heritage. And as Rudolph (2006) points out Jacques Derrida in *Speech and Phenomena* interrogates Husserl's *Logical Investigations* – the radical irreducibility of language as the condition for sense and meaning. In this sense Derrida's project is also aimed at a critique of a certain picture of language embodied by Augustine that accepts the privileged concept of 'presence' that sanctions the entire Western philosophical project. Remember Wittgenstein's *Investigations* begins with a critical reception of the Augustinian picture theory of language and a reference to Augustine's *Confessions*

– ‘When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out.’ And as Wittgenstein (1972: para 1) goes on to observe:

These words, it seems to me, give us a particular picture of the essence of human language. It is this: the individual words in language name objects – sentences are combinations of such names. –In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. The meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.

Poststructuralism and its intellectual antecedents also seemed to play into a wider canvas that from the first origins of European formalism tracked the developments of high modernism in art and literature as parallel and intersecting conversations. Yet after the death of Foucault in 1984, even though he remains the most cited author in the social sciences and humanities, and thereafter the deaths of Deleuze, Lyotard and Derrida, poststructuralism seemed to be on the wane. Its highpoint came in the 1980s with largely rhetorical battles with Habermas, doctrinaire Marxism, and, of course, cultural conservatism, over allegations of relativism and the like. Certainly, postmodernism as a movement in architecture and the arts was the first to fall victim to the university cycle of intellectual fashion and commodity-fetish in criticism. As the critic Charles Jencks noted, postmodernism quickly moved through the cycle from rebellion and resistance to institutionalization and acceptance, as witnessed by the anthologies that began to flourish in the 1980s in a variety of fields. The canon had been identified, the terms of debate had been stabilized and the life had been drained from any residual movement of resistance that still remained.

In some ways education had been slow to respond to postmodernism and poststructuralism. Principally, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Doug Kellner, Joe Kincheloe, Colin Lankshear, Patti Lather, Jim Marshall, Tom Popkewitz and myself were among the first to respond and engage with these movements in the early to mid 1980s. Some like Henry Giroux remained within the realm of cultural studies in interpreting the broad implications of postmodernism; others like Jim Marshall and Tom Popkewitz focused on Foucault; and scholars like Patti Lather interrogated the movements for what they meant for feminism and educational research. Peter McLaren renounced postmodernism for Marxism, leading the Left charge against postmodernism. By the nineties there were scholars who could be identified in education who were involved in the *explication de text* of Lyotard, Foucault, Derrida, Irigaray and others (Peter Trifonas, Gert Biesta). And of course there were those who sought to dethrone French theory from the perspective of one

existing branch of education and educational research, most often positions that comprised a combination of liberal politics and liberal epistemology of science – Denis Phillips and Wally Feinberg come to mind

At the same time, postcolonial criticism from its origins in Hegelian phenomenology and originary statements in Fanon and Césaire received a strong impetus from phenomenology, structuralism, and later poststructuralism and began to accompany and then take over from poststructuralism as the dominant paradigm of cultural criticism, supplemented by the whole gamut of a range of critical movements and methodologies in feminist, psychoanalytical, and neo-Marxist thought. But postcoloniality, and in so far as it drew systematically on wider theoretical insights from poststructuralism and poststructuralist and cultural Marxism, also seems to have reached a kind of intellectual stasis that followed the hiatus of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Cultural Imperialism* (1991). It feels as though the main elements of the program have been identified and now most of that required is the working over of full case-study detail in all their historical complexity and particularities. In some ways postcoloniality readily mapped onto existing concerns in studies of racism, gender and class in educational theory and yet its theoretical trajectory now seems more wedded to global studies of education, to globalization, and to neoliberalism in education policy, than simply to the critique of Western imperialism. In this regard we witness the beginnings of new studies of post-Occidentalism, a speculative hue of thought about the end or the decline of the West and the rise of the Rest, to use the terms of both Oswald Spengler and Stuart Hall.

I was recently greatly encouraged in this reading when I discovered the essay by Nancy Partner (2009) called 'Narrative Persistence: The Post-Postmodern Life of Narrative Theory' in an edited collection *Re-figuring Hayden White* (Ankersmit et al, 2009). Partner asks what is left behind after postmodernism and the linguistic turn apart from the social constructedness of knowledge. She quotes Michael Roth in this regard indicating that he thinks after the 'massive tide of language...has receded' the next waves of theory might be ethics, intensity, postcolonialism, empire, the sacred, cosmopolitanism, trauma, animals – Partner herself adds 'memory, experience agency, religion and the sublime. Yet these seem to be little more than tropes, themes, issues that could easily come from the theoretical wellspring of postmodernism. Partner then continues to document the fact that 'sometime around 1990 or thereafter, or maybe a little later, the linguistic turn has succeeded in turning everything into a text' (p. 83) and while the textuality and language-embeddings of history and just about everything else is not reversible, 'semantic analysis, large-scale structural analysis, rhetoric, and tropes' and critical modes of discourse analysis, have reached their shelf life, which is to say that they have quickly become methodologized and

institutionalized so that the critical life has been drained from them. I am more than sympathetic with this view except that it is strange for a historian to embark on a rhetorical historiography of philosophy (as it affects history) without recognizing the context nature of that history and the political nature of its descriptions. It seems only narrative and narrative analysis persist.

Partner (2008, 827) makes the case in an earlier paper:

The whole point (to put it reductively) of postmodernism was to challenge the authority of authority, with special attention to the production and presentation of knowledge in the humanistic disciplines: history, literature, and anthropology. Narrative theory was introduced to most of the humanities as part of the post-modern linguistic-turn repertoire dedicated to exposing the textuality, the constructedness, and unacknowledged ideological freight of narrative form, a cultural artifact made of language. Narrative theory denaturalized the story form in its central function of imposing intelligible form on time. This move, the pivotal postmodernist move of destabilizing the linguistic forms of knowledge-presentation, was most problematic for professional historians. The other humanities disciplines recognized immediate postmodernist benefits. Unpacking and exposing the instability of verbal meanings, of all modes of representation whether at the single word/world level or the more interesting ambiguities of whole narrative accounts, mainly enriched literary study, arming critics with yet sharper instruments for uncovering the suppressed and denied secrets of canonical texts.

And Partner (2008, 830–831) also deftly explains the pedagogical consequences for historians:

As we more and more clearly enter the post-postmodern moment, whatever cultural form that eventually takes, most of the linguistic turn's instruments, including narrative theory, seem assimilated to routine academic purposes, ideologically tamed to ordinary seminar room use. Narrative should have sunk well below the surface of visible cultural ferment, along with deconstruction, social constructionism, semiotics, and the like. Professional historians, and literary/cultural critics, seem hardly to have noticed that narrative, as a self-consciously deployed weapon for making real claims on the real world, had escaped its university precincts to gain traction and accelerate through the world of post-cold war resurgent nationalisms. Every instance of this neonationalist self-assertion (examples force themselves on our attention daily) comes to its most intense expression around the story, "our story," in classic narrative form. The formulation and defense of the national narrative is a central feature of every new assertion

of national claims in every part of the world where state structures are fluid or unstable, and every such narrative is constructed to meet and counter another version which must be denied.

She goes on to discuss the status and role of narrative construction in public settings and in constructing public memory as a collective narrative form that speaks to older forms of belonging and recounting and the reality of imagined communities that are constructed from ‘human intention, aspirations, and a deep sense of collective identity and are thus real and persistent over time’ (p. 832). Again, I am sympathetic to this call for stock-taking and I too have a sense of the moment of postmodernism being ‘over’ – its highpoint has passed us by and while remaining as part of the theory archive it seemingly has lost its critical edge. Isn’t this what ‘institutionalization’ consists in – reading lists, courses, shortcuts, anthologies – actually the heart of historiography itself in creating an archival memory. Yet I also need to register a protest against the method of argument because narrative has never been the same after narratology, after the application and refinement of structuralist and linguistic methods, first with the Russian formalists and then, partly as consequence, with Paul Ricoeur, Tzvetan Todorov, Algirdas Greimas, Roland Barthes, and, of course, Hayden White who derives his distinctive synthesis from Giambattista Vico and Erich Auerbach, with apologies to Leopold von Ranke, Jules Michelet, Alexis de Tocqueville, Jacon Burckhardt, and almost the entire canon of nineteenth century philosophers of history. Barthes (1975) argues that every narrative is interwoven with multiple codes and these help comprise its multiple meanings. Through the hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, cultural codes we imposed historical order, stabilized meanings at least temporarily in order to assert interpretations.

In these terms narrative analysis and narratology grow out of structuralism and are subject to all the refinements and continuing debate that postmodernism puts on the agenda. If I was forced to say simply what comes *next*, crudely speaking, then I would respond: **returns** – the return to ontology (Badiou), the return to Marxism (Ranciere), the critical return to Marx and Freud (Deleuze); **circulations** – second generation cybernetics and systems theory as applied to globalization and global systems including global knowledge and learning systems, the pervasiveness of the new biology and ecological models of all descriptions, the emergence of digital theory, digital materialism, immaterial labor, ‘cybernetic’ understandings of capitalism (cybernetic political economy), mathematics of complex systems, topology; **interdisciplinaries** – biology and history, biology and education, and...; **historiographies** – encouraging the greater awareness of the constructedness of disciplinary history and their ability to wrongfoot us; **interculturalities** – with an emphasis on cultural practices of everything, interculturalism; **spatialities** – almost done, but reinterpreted and reintegrated with temporal

studies after the spatial turn; *integrations* – intersections, internationalisms, interactions; *differences* – perhaps, enough said already?

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