Levinas

“Man’s relationship with the other is better as difference than as unity: sociality is better than fusion. The very value of love is the impossibility of reducing the other to myself, of coinciding into sameness. From an ethical perspective two have a better time than one (on s’amuse mieux à deux)!” (Levinas, in Richard Kearney, States of Mind)

Derrida

A certain concept of the sign
Instead of having a signifier of a signified, all we get is a signifier of a signifier.

In speech, the word (signifier) signifies the actual object to an actual or present person. In writing, the signifier/(written) word signifies the previous signifier/(spoken) word that signifies the actual obj to an actual or present person:

old epoch

speech:  
signifier --> signified

expression --> obj

writing:  
(written) signifier --> (spoken) signifier --> signified

(written) expression --> (spoken) expression --> obj

now

Speech itself is writing. I.e. it’s a signifier of a signifier, not of an (actual or ideal) object.
“the signified always already functions as a signifier” (269)
“Signifier of the signifier’ describes on the contrary the movement of language” (269)

guaranteed’ (268) “archon” (270)

“The ‘rationality’...which governs a writing...no longer issues from a logos” (272)

de-construction”: “it inaugurates the destruction, not the demolition but the de-sedimentation, the de-construction, of all the significations that have their source in that of the logos” (272)

death of the civilization of the book” (270)

“the idea of the book” (280)

Rationality

Rationality no longer issues from the logos. It initiates the de-construction of significations that have their source in the logos, i.e. truth

What’s the change?

(Ari: spoken words are symbols of mental experience... written words are symbols of spoken words)

translatn
natural significatn
resemblance

conventnl symbolization

things------------------>mental experience------------------------>logos----------------->writing

(same for all) voice: immediate
proximity to mental experience (which is the same for all)

We think mental experience is the same for all. Voice gives voice to mental experience which is the same for all. Language, to the contrary, is conventional. Also, secondary. It’s the secondary re-presentation of mental experience. Language is different for different people. Mental experience is the same (it’s ideal).

Writing is secondary to speech. Speech is secondary to mental experience: “absolute proximity of voice and being” (274).

“With an irregular and essentially precarious success, this movement would apparently have tended, as toward its telos, to confine writing to a secondary and instrumental function: translator of a full speech that was fully present (present to itself, to its signified, to the other, the very condition of the theme of presence in general), technics in the service of language, spokesman, interpreter of an originary speech itself shielded from interpretation” (269).