Haine de la poésie: Nonsense and the Absence of God[1]

Anthony O'Shea

University of Sunderland, UK

abstract

In this paper I explore George Bataille's figuring of the loss of meaning and self-identity in relation to his work *Haine de la poésie.* Bataille considers poetry to be important to human communication as it operates at the limits of discourse. Transgressive and excessive, it dissolves and exceeds the profane subject and reveals the sacred. Whilst Plato may have believed that poetry could be excluded from the Republic, Bataille argues that it has never left: it remains immanent to and helps construct the human condition. It continually reveals to us that we are not the center of creation and that some excessive experiences are beyond our understanding. Nonetheless we are forced to attempt to know and communicate because these experiences are excessive. One such experience is desire. Bataille leaves organisational theory with a challenge: how do we recognise and respond to these excessive experiences that remain beyond words?

Introduction

> At the same time, love was burning me. I was limited by words. I had exhausted myself with love in the void, as if in the presence of a desirable and undressed - but inaccessible - woman. Without even being able to express a desire. …As I was staring at the void in front of me, a touch - immediately violent and excessive - joined me to that void. I saw that void and saw nothing, but it, the void, was embracing me… (Bataille, 1991b: 143)

The Impossible (Bataille, 1991a) is a three-part prose and poetry novel amongst Georges Bataille's works published originally in 1947 as *Haine de la poésie* (Hatred of Poetry). The title was changed in 1962 by Bataille to *The Impossible* with the publication of the second edition since "almost no one understood the meaning of the first title… [although i]t's true that this second title is far from being clearer…but it may be one day" (Bataille, 1991a: 10). *The Impossible* is a story of a continual quest for an ecstatic, sacred experience that continually slips from and evades the narrator. The narrator comes to a realisation that the sacred is not contained within an object that we love, or at some fixed point in the future or past that we travel towards or away from but is elusive and ephemeral. The subject is lost

_____

1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism (SCOS) Conference 2000 as 'The hatred of poetry: Bataille's desire for poetry in the republic'.

at the very point of experiencing the sacred and truth is momentarily revealed. What is revealed and re-veiled[2] is that "we have in fact only two certainties in this world – that we are not everything and that we will die" (Bataille, 1988b: xxxii).

The truth of truth is these certainties: we are not everything and we will die. The sacred[3] is more than us: more than we can ever know and understand, we are too insufficient to hold it and so it continually escapes us. In the moment of the ecstatic and excessive experience of the sacred we are lost, dissolved in and exhausted by the infinite void of this inner experience. This is an experience of loss, a death of the subject who is then born anew. This is no Phoenix that arises from its own ashes, the subject does not return from death as the self-same: this is the birth of a ruptured, agonised and anguished subject. Found wanting and contaminated by the sacred, caught in the shadow of its own mortality, knowing that it will die, yet in fear of and in flight from it. This is an anguished subject that is human, all too human. Much more than the flight of Icarus (Taylor, 1987: 114-148)[4] as an attempt to touch the Sun/God, this is also a story of the fall of Lucifer as a being found wanting by the sacred. This is a story of ecstatic experience followed and presaged by a fall from grace.

In this paper I will explore Bataille's figuring of truth and the loss of meaning and self-identity particularly in relation to his *Haine de la poésie*. Poetry is important for Bataille as it operates at the limit of discourse and thus at the limit of our understanding of humanity, human society and the human condition. It is transgressive, a momentary excess that exceeds and confirms the limit: a moment that dissolves the profane subject and reveals the sacred. Poetry is a necessary part of society because it affirms the sacred as the immanence without which we would not be human. I will argue first that Bataille's *Haine de la poésie* not only returns poetry to Plato's Republic but recognises that poetry never left. I will then

---

2 Blanchot (1993) argues that language and truth is both a revealing and a reveiling. In knowing something as an object as a being in-itself, the object is revealed to the subject. However this specular knowledge always at the same time covers a reveiling of everything that cannot be reduced or subjected to the being in-itself by the spectator. For Bataille sacred experience involves a complex double dialectic where we are brought to and exposed to death yet attempt to refuse and turn away from it but can never deny it. Death makes us human.

3 The sacred for Bataille is everything that the profane has attempted to exclude. The profane is the rational world of work, utility and project. The sacred is not the same as Christian religiosity: it is wild and excessive, it risks us and continually threatens the profane. The profane attempts to suppress, exclude and negate the sacred through the use of the taboo. Yet the taboo paradoxically must acknowledge the sacred: quite simply you do not render taboo what does not exist. Moreover the profane attempts exclude the sacred to negate its force and violence. The taboo here operates as a turning away, a recoil from violence and death. This is however itself an expressive act that is irrational: we recoil from horror, say "Yeuch" when confronted with the decayed and putrefying remains of offal, literally cry out in pain and cry tears of sorrow. All are an overflow of the sacred as experience in reaction to the sacred (Guerlac, 1997; Kristeva, 1984).

4 Bataille (1985: 70) compares Icarus with the eagle who "alone among all beings can contemplate while staring at 'the sun in all its glory', the Icarian being who goes to seek the fires of heaven is, however, nothing more than the automutilator." Mark C. Taylor considers Bataille's argument here as an excessive practice of the subject: in so doing he rather collapses Bataille's argument into an existential seeking after God. Taylor's modernist (Ward, 1997: xl-xlii) appropriation of a 'pre' or 'post' modern (and I hesitate to use these labels) Bataille ignores Bataille's continual argument in his works that figure us caught in and constituted by flows of power.

argue that we are not Cartesian human subjects, nor are we Kristevean (1987) humans because we love but are human only because of desire. Desire is the sacred, an impossible beyond of inner experience that overcomes us momentarily at times of ecstatic, excessive experience. I will also argue that Bataille leaves organizational theory with a challenge: how do we recognise and respond to *The Impossible*?

Haine de la poésie

In Book X of *The Republic,* in *Laws* and in Diotima of Mantineia's story in the *Symposium,* Plato rejects any form of poetry that is not constitutive of ethical existence. For Plato poetry is a "moral rather than a linguistic construct" (Asmis, 1992: 345) it acts as the bridge between mortals and the divine, "the poet is a creator of moral goodness and the poem serves only as a means of conveying this goodness" (Asmis, 1992: 345). Although he recognises that poetry may reflect both the good and the evil of the human condition, he argues that the *duty* of the poet is to constitute only the good:

> Let this then be one of our rules and principles concerning the gods, to which our poets and reciters will be expected to conform - that God is not the author of all things, but of good only. (Plato, 1948: 358)

For Plato God can only in word and/or deed constitute the truth and "the lying poet has no place in our idea of God" (Plato, 1948: 361). He not only expels the "lying poet" from the Republic, that is any who do not constitute and uphold the moral good, he rejects anything that is not moral good. Poetry here is the development of moral good as a means to reflect and repeat the transcendental pure: 'non-ethical' poetry is a hatred of the pure, it is the hatred of meaning, the very hatred of a transcendental God. This reduction of poetry to a restricted form of meaning, is however a hatred *of* poetry that promulgates two forms of poetry, one that is good because it accepts the pure and one that is evil. Good and evil are not part of the sacred but of the profane: an attempt to know, understand and curb (Bataille 1989a). It is an attempt to curb the sacred and bring it under the control of the profane. It then permits the exclusion of 'evil' poetry. It presumes then that poetry has two forms that are separable and different, that there are two distinct beings that we might call ethical and non-ethical poetry. But what if the sacred cannot be reduced to the profane and if poetry is not separable? What if they are both good and evil, or perhaps neither good nor evil? What if there is no God either in the onto-theological or the metonymic sense: what if, as John Lennon once sang, there is no hell below us and above us only sky? In this sacred void where God, absolute meaning and knowledge are absent truth loses its ground. This is a void however that is not one that can be collapsed into *différance*. The very being of God and truth is not a God who has yet to come (Derrida, 1995): a God whose very absence demands that we defer understanding of the deity not as *tout autre* but an absence of sense, a non-sense in the present that we experience. The sacred void is not Derrida's (1974) *mise en abyme* that would require an "infinite amount of time" to investigate (Gasché, 1994). It is an immediate experience that tears us apart, leaves us gasping for breath and crying out for more even whilst we know that we cannot contain its infinite night. There is no sense

here that given time[5], an infinity of time, that we would reach its bottom and that the deferred God would return. Instead we experience the sacred, lose ourselves in it and lose it, fall from it only to be returned to it. This infinite repetition keeps repeating that we are not everything, we will die (and so lose ourselves an infinite number of times), and that we will never attain the absolute, never know God and certainly never become God.[6] Humanity is too frail and ephemeral a thing to fill this void: Sartre's desiring existential subject is too insufficient to become God. The truth revealed to us is in this immediate and overwhelming experience is always then a discourse of our insufficiency and the sacred's excess. An excess that is more than us, ruptures us, beyond our understanding and ability to communicate but forces us to communicate. This excess ruptures our being, leaves us as an open wound that continually exhausts itself: it leaves us dying to talk, driven to tears, wanting to share our joy, pain, tears, laughter and sorrow. The sacred is both the tears of Eros and a tearing experience.[7] This exhaustion makes us organise, to socialise, to form societies in order to expel the sacred, give it release through communion and communication. Yet this release is never enough, communication is a project of the profane world of work, meaning and truth: the profane is a human endeavour and is insufficient to know, understand and grasp the sacred (Connor, 2000). Indeed we know this to be subjectively true: when we laugh excessively to the point of crying we want to share the experience and others want to share it too, but we can find no way of doing so through rational communication. This excessive laughter can only be experienced, it cannot be communicated because it is sacred: it is an inner experience that refers to nothing but itself, communication in the profane however is always relational.

––––––––––

5 Derrida (1993) argues that we cannot give time as it is not a gift that we possess. In this sense there is no time like the present (as a gift) that recalls to my mind Blanchot's (1995) word play. Yet Bataille's argument is yet another reversal, the void is the absence of a presence that cannot be fulfilled by humans. In Bataille's void there are only sacred, inner experiences. These are neither objects nor do they have any external referents: they are non-comparable and do not exist in space or endure through time. They are immediate, excessive experiences that refer only to themselves. They arrive as the lightening flash and are gone in the wink of an eye but when we are caught by them time can dilate out to infinity or contract on itself so as to disappear. We subjectively experience these moments as rhythms that we come to think of in terms of a subjective time. This non-linear time of *durée*, contra Bergson (1923), is not a temporal container of everything but is preceded by and given content by the sacred. We know this to be subjectively true. In the bittersweet absence of my partner time for me seems to crawl, to stand still and to dilate out into infinity. Transfixed by the plenitude of my baby, I'm lost in her smile: I drown in an unfulfilled desire. This is no desire figured as lack, but an immediate experience that deepens even as I drown in it but that is gone all to quickly regardless of what the clock on the wall claims! I cannot adequately describe this experience, I am too insufficient and words are not enough. Furthermore the very difference that makes me human, that makes me an individual opposes any appeal here to a common experience. Yet the excess of the inner experience demands that we communicate and in order to do so we must attempt the impossible: I am driven to bridge the infinite gulf between myself and others. And so we try to create common experiences where none may exist.

6 God, for Bataille is both an impossible absence and absent, an impossible void that cannot or should not be filled. To become God would entail more than that we become Sartre's no-thing as it would fill the void of the sacred and visit death unto the profane world in all its untrammelled force. When Oppenheimer saw his atomic bomb explode he murmured "I am the alpha and the omega". He thought that he had become God. When he saw the consequence of the bomb he cried out in anguish, "I am become death, destroyer of worlds".

7 *The Tears of Eros* (Bataille, 1989b) was Bataille's final work.

Poetry and the Transgression of Meaning

> Poetry that does not rise to the non-sense of poetry is only the hollowness of poetry, is only beautiful poetry. (Bataille, 1991b: 161)

The experience of the sacred leaves us gasping for breath and vaguely aware that we are insufficient for the sacred. It also leaves us contaminated by it: the fall from grace is the fall of a lost being who nonetheless falls to earth holding some part of the sacred as a Promethian fire. The sacred returns to and is thus always present in the profane even whilst the profane attempts to ignore, exclude, even negate it. We cannot put out this fire and if we ignore it, it will accumulate as *la part maudite* (Bataille, 1988a and 1991c), grow larger until it eventually runs out of control, catastrophically consuming everything. Plato's separation and rejection of non-ethical poetry from the Republic is one instance of profane societies' attempts to exclude the sacred. It attempts to repress and deny what is evil and ugly in humankind, the poison and hatred of humanity, but in so doing sows the seeds of its own destruction. In attempting to exclude, it must know, name and give birth to (a human conception of) evil. His attempt to repress or negate non-ethical poetry cannot exclude evil, it leaves it hidden within the Republic, festering and accumulating as an accursed share, *la part maudite*, until it can erupt so violently that it ruptures society through war or other means of mass destruction.

Poetry however is a continual attempt to write and speak the impossible, that is what lies beyond because "true poetry is beyond laws" (Bataille, 1991b: 158). It is an attempt to transgress the profane, to communicate the sacred, but through a discourse that transgresses language. For Bataille poetry joins us to the void where there is no fixed meaning and no good or evil but in doing so it does not negate meaning, good and evil, beauty and the ugly, it instead transgresses them. Transgression "does not deny the taboo but transcends and completes it" (Bataille, 1987: 63). Without transgression a rule would be a brute fact of life. Transgression does not negate a rule; it completes it in order to affirm it and then goes beyond it. Poetry does not deny that we have concepts about good and evil, beauty and ugliness, it instead plays with them, calls them into question and goes beyond them into a void, it "removes one from the night and the day at the same time" (Bataille, 1991b: 159). For Bataille "[p]oetry has no powerful meaning except in the violence of revolt" (Bataille, 1991a: 10). Poetry here is a continual subversion and transgression of meaning.

Poetry for Bataille is a continual mode of praxis, a continual play and movement between a suspension of meaning and its oblivion in the void. This movement however is not a nihilism that we passively submit ourselves to it. It is an affirmative seeking after of sovereignty. It is a continual "self-subversion" (Lala, 1995: 109) where we seek our own sovereignty. Sovereignty for Bataille is a continual self-legitimation. A legitimation that requires us to continually transgress rules and taboos in order to affirm that we are *self-legitimating*. For Bataille the human condition is premised as a Nietzschean ontological self-overcoming: we are not sovereign beings, Hegelian Masters or Slaves, we are instead beings who attempt to achieve sovereignty.

Poetry as a movement of transgression, as the impossible that opens out onto the void, continually fractures the profane and opens it out on to the sacred excess. It is a means by which *la part maudite* may be consumed or escape without catastrophic destruction. Poetry

is the hatred of beautiful poetry, a continued act of self-subversion where the sacred finds momentary release in the profane by transgressing it. It attempts to continually unground itself, to place itself into the void, to continually move beyond itself and meaning. It is an act of continual "self-subversion". As an act of "self-subversion" there is no ground for an accumulation of meaning or of *la part maudite*; there is no ground: "I approach poetry: but only to miss it" (Bataille, 1991b: 159). Poetry here, rather like Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, continually moves beyond expectations and meaning.

Poetry opens out on to a void where meaning is continually put into play and where *la part maudite* can not accumulate excessively. It "opens the night to desire's excess. In me the night abandoned by the ravages of poetry is the measure of a refusal - of my mad will to *exceed* the world" (Bataille, 1991b: 162; my emphasis). It is a means whereby we are exposed to the force of desire. Desire opens us up to the sacred, unrestricted by the profane even whilst it is at the limit of the profane.

Desire for Poetry

> Realism gives me the impression of a mistake. Violence alone escapes the feeling of poverty of those realistic experiences. Only death and desire have the force that oppresses, that takes one's breath away. Only the extremism of desire and of death enables one to attain the truth. (Bataille, 1991a: 9)

Bataille argues that true poetry is a continual transgression of meaning. He further argues that only death and desire have the necessary force to make us transgress in this way. For Bataille the only truth and certainties that we face are that, "[w]e have in fact only two certainties in this world – that we are not everything and that we will die" (Bataille, 1988b: XXXII). For Bataille the human condition is a complex series of contradictions based on our continual refusal to accept that we will all ultimately die. Death remains as a limit experience, society, culture, technology, religion, all the trappings of the human world are our attempts to distance and protect our selves from Death. Death however can never be denied, we are all ultimately fated to die. We can only truly attempt to achieve sovereignty, Nietzschean self-overcomings, when we face up to and accept this. Desire for Bataille is a force, perhaps the only force, capable of bringing us to this truth. In so doing desire forces us to face up to and find a meaning in death.

Bataille presents a complex anti-Hegelian reading of desire to argue that it is a force external to us, that has many different modalities but one form (O'Shea, 1999). Rather like Deleuze's affirmation of Bergson's time, desire here is a singular multiplicity (Deleuze, 1988): desire is Nietzsche's will to power (O'Shea, 2000). At its most extreme desire is a force without limits, capable of seizing us and throwing us into the eternal void, capable of continually rupturing our being, of leaving us continually open to and rended by its full force. In the void nothing exists to protect us from the force of desire, there is *no* Republic here and certainly no *God*. All that awaits us is Death and desire.

As a force that is external to us, desire is beyond our control. It is not we who desire something but desire that overwhelms us, rends us, leaves us incomplete without substance and ground in the eternal void that is beyond the restricted economy. Bataille's poetry here both paves a way for desire to come to us and is our own inability to describe it and its

effects adequately: poetry as a moment of transgression at the limit of the profane. We are left "limited by words [unable] to express a desire…Staring at the void in front of me" (Bataille, 1991b: 143). Desire is external to us and completely *other* to us as the *tout autre*. We can not control it or fully describe it. It is beyond, indifferent to and different from our attempts to understand and find meaning for it. Language can not do justice to it since language is some thing of the rational world. At best we can try to describe desire by putting language into play through poetry. Desire remains as an irrational force, beyond human rational, conscious comprehension yet capable of seizing us and taking us beyond our world of laws, taboos, language and beautiful poetry:

> I am falling into the immensity
> Which falls into itself
> It is blacker than my death…
>
> …the immensity
> and I
> denounce the lies of each other
>
> truth dies
> and I cry
> that truth lies…
> (Bataille, 1999: 61-62)

Plato's beautiful poetry clings on to a presumption that there is some pure essence that is beyond us. Bataille however argues that beyond us, beyond the profane there is the sacred night. In the immensity of this night without stars there is no substance, no essence, there is only a void in which we may continually attempt to self-legitimate and where poetry continually seeks to "self-subvert" poetry, meaning, truth. In the void desire finds its voice as Bataille's poetry of the impossible: "poetry attains this violence [the revolt of meaning] only by evoking the impossible" (Bataille, 1991a: 10).

The Hatred of Poetry

> Humanity is faced with a double perspective: in one direction, violent pleasure, horror and death - precisely the perspective of poetry - and in the opposite direction, that of science or the real world of utility… [W]e must, respond to something which, not being God, is stronger that every right, that *impossible* to which we accede only by forgetting the truth of all these rights [of the real world of utility], only by accepting disappearance. (Bataille, 1991a: 10)

Plato's reduction of poetry then is a hatred *of* poetry: it is an attempt to reduce it to a single form, fix it and restrict to a given system of meaning. This poetry remains within and is part of the logic of the profane world of utility: things have value because they have a meaning and meaning is itself given by value. In so doing this logic of utility violates poetry as play, as a continual unfolding, transgression and dissolution of meaning, but it can not negate it. *La part maudite* is retained, immanent to and capable of rupturing the Republic and its restricted economy of meaning. *La part maudite* remains in Plato's republic because poetry has been restricted to a system of (Divine, religious rather than sacred) meaning that is transcendental to and beyond us. Here there is no way out for, nor any means of consuming, the accursed share until it explosively ruptures the Republic.

Indeed we are locked into a world not of our own making: a world made in seven days by a God who is everything but is completely beyond us.[8] In the absence of an onto-theological and metonymic God however there is nothing to hold us to the profane. In this absence we can momentarily attain the sacred.

Bataille argues that poetry and desire are immanent to the social profane world, and particularly modern societies since the Republic because they are restricted economies of accumulation. Poetry must be a continually seeking after the impossible, a continual attempt at "self-subversion". This impossible form of poetry gives a voice to a desire that opens us to the infinite beyond Plato's restricted realm of the Republic. It opens us up to an infinite void where meaning, truth and substance are continually ungrounded, dissolved and lost. Poetry here is a praxis, a play, unfolding, transgression and dissolution of meaning. As praxis poetry can both consume the accursed share and also continually open up the restricted economy. *La part maudite* does not have to be accumulated but can instead be expended in a non-catastrophic manner. For Bataille the hatred of poetry is a hatred of the restricted economy, a hatred of systems that attempt to fix meaning and that deny "the wonder struck cry of life" (Bataille, 1989a: 46). Bataille thus demonstrates both the complex dialectical form of the *Haine de la poésie* and why poetry ultimately is transgressive.

Bataille's message for organizational theorists then foreshadows much of 'post-modern', 'post-structural' thought. We need to recognise that the truth of organizations is not contained within some objective element of their nature. Organisation and organising here is a social practice of the profane world (Chia, 1996). It is nevertheless a practice that can never be completed because meaning escapes the profane, death remains to curtail any project of human endeavour. It is a continual attempt to distance our selves from death, but it is a practice that is ultimately doomed to failure. There are perhaps two complex questions then for organizational theorists to explore: how does meaning and truth come to be constituted, conveyed, accepted and undone through organising; how can we organise ourselves in such a way as to face up to, accept and find joy in this knowledge? Bataille's response is the challenge of *The Impossible*:

> Must I lose my reason for writing?
>
> If I spoke of war and torture…: seeing that war and torture, today, are situated at points which ordinary language has determined, I would stray from my object - which draws me beyond the accepted limits.
>
> What does philosophy matter since it is this naïve contestation: the questioning that we can only undertake when we are appeased! How could we be *appeased* if we did not rely on a whole body of presupposed knowledge? Introducing a metaphysical given at the extreme limit of thought comically reveals its essence: that of every philosophy. (Bataille, 1991a: 40)

The Impossible for Organizational Theory is to be a continually transgressive praxis and reflective not only of a *différance* of meaning but to be an attempt to express the

---

8 Apropos here is Geoffrey Bennington's (1995) article 'Because the world is round'. Bennington argues that Bataille's general economy of excessive consumption is and must be restricted because the world has physical limits. He ignores that Bataille's argument, rather like Deleuze, opens us out onto the sacred infinite that is not restricted by some physical limit.

immediate, visceral, excessive experiences that make us human. Whilst the latter is impossible it is nonetheless something that we must attempt, indeed that we are driven to do. It is a challenge to write, speak and enact organizational theory and practice as a poetic "self-subversion". If we do not attempt *The Impossible* then we remain caught within the delimited space circumscribed by the limit experience. All that there is here is an already constituted form of knowledge. A form of knowledge that traps us within limits but that ultimately is not true, an empty and meaningless objectification of life.

references

Asmis, E. (1992) 'Plato on Poetic Creativity', in R. Kraut (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bataille, G. (1985) *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939* (transl. by A. Stoekl). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bataille, G. (1987) *Eroticism* (transl. by M. Dalwood). London: Marion Boyars.

Bataille, G. (1988a) *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Volume 1 - Consumption* (transl. by R. Hurley). New York: Zone Books.

Bataille, G. (1988b) *Inner Experience* (transl. by L.A. Boldt). New York: State University of New York Press.

Bataille, G (1989a) *Theory of Religion* (transl. by R. Hurley). New York: Zone Books.

Bataille, G. (1989b) *The Tears of Eros*. San Francisco: City Lights Books.

Bataille, G. (1991a) *The Impossible* (transl. by R. Hurley). San Fransisco: City Lights.

Bataille, G. (1991b) 'The Oresteia' In G. Bataille *The Impossible* (transl. by R. Hurley). San Francisco: City Lights Books.

Bataille, G. (1991c) *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Volume 2 - The History of Eroticism* and *Volume 3 - Sovereignty* (published here in a single volume transl. by R. Hurley). New York: Zone Books.

Bataille, G. (1999) 'The Archangelical. The Tomb', in G. Bataille *The Collected Poems of Georges Bataille* (transl. by M. Spitzer). Chester Springs, PA: Dufour Editions.

Bennington, G. (1995) 'Introduction to Economics I: Because the World is Round', in C. Bailey Gill *Bataille. Writing the Sacred*. London: Routledge.

Bergson, H. (1923, 1999) *Duration and Simultaneity: Bergson and the Einsteinian Universe*. Manchester: Clinamen press.

Blanchot, M. (1993) *The Infinite Conversation* (transl. by S. Hanson). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Blanchot, M. (1995) *The Writing of the Disaster* (transl. by A. Smock). London: University of Nebraska Press.

Chia, R. (1996) *Organizational Analysis as Deconstructive Practice*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Conner, P.T. (2000) *Georges Bataille and the Mysticism of Sin*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1988) *Bergsonism* (transl. by H. Tomlinson). New York: Zone Books.

Derrida, J. (1973) *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money* (transl. by P. Kamuf). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Derrida, J. (1974, 1997) *Of Grammatology* (transl. by G. Chakravorty Spivak). London: John Hopkins University Press.

Derrida, J. (1995) *On the Name* (transl. by J. Leavey). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Gasché, R. (1994) 'Structural Infinity', in R. Gasché *Inventions of difference: On Jacques Derrida*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Guerlac, S. (1997) *Literary Polemics: Bataille, Sartre, Valéry, Breton*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kristeva, J. (1984) *Revolution in Poetic Language* (transl. by M. Waller). New York: Columbia University Press.

Kristeva, J. (1987) *Tales of Love* (transl. by L.S. Roudiez). New York: Columbia University Press.

Lala, M.-C. (1995) 'The Hatred of Poetry in Georges Bataille's Writing and Thought', in C. Bailey Gill (ed.) *Bataille: Writing the Sacred*. London: Routledge.

O'Shea, A. (1999) 'Desire and Performativity', Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on *Postmodern Perspectives: Literature, Culture and Society*, Erlangen, Germany.

O'Shea, A. (2000) 'The Becoming of Time and Innovation', Presented at *Bergson and the Social Sciences Conference*, Northumbria, UK.

Plato (1948) *The Portable Plato* (transl. by B. Jowett). London: Penguin.

Taylor, M.C. (1987) *Altarity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ward, G. (1997) 'Introduction, or, a Guide to Theological Thinking in Cyberspace', in G. Ward (ed.) *The Postmodern God. A Theological Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

the author

Tony O'Shea left the world of management and managers back in 1997 to study and has now returned as a lecturer at the University of Sunderland. Having recently completed his thesis he finds that all the free time that people talk about 'when you complete' is illusory. When not at work, or looking after his baby daughter, he writes bizarre papers on Georges Bataille and desire. His other research interests include the works of Maurice Blanchot, contemporary philosophy, the non-rational, and death. Whilst some like to call him a 'post-structuralist' Tony has an aversion to labels, preferring to be enigmatic.

Address: Sunderland Business School, University of Sunderland, St Peter's Campus, St Peter's Way, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, England, UK

Email: tony.oshea@sunderland.ac.uk

discussion

To discuss this article, email ephemeraweb@yahoogroups.com using the following subject line:
1(1) O'Shea – Haine de la poésie
To register for the ephemera discussion forum visit http://www.ephemeraweb.org/discussion
To view the archive of discussion on this article visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ephemeraweb/messages
The discussion archive is also searchable by keyword and/or contributor.