

Conclusion

In the final analysis we are, some of us at least, seduced by writing. And the answer to the question of whether or not we can read other books, books as other, is no, we cannot, and we cannot really resist them – because they, in all their indeterminability, openness, freedom, and susceptibility to infection by ideology, their self-deconstructibility, are what we now are. As I argued in Chapter 5, the language of literature is a language of self-resistance. So, if we find resistance to the idea of self in current writing, it is meant in part to alert us to an element of self-resistance that is at the heart of civilization and morality and that inheres in writing as part of that moral civilization. If we think we can overcome our self-resistance and become single and whole, we are probably wrong. If we think our resistance to ourselves and to writing will be successful and in the victory of our resistance we shall arrive in the world undivided and comfortable by way of writing, then we are wrong. We may want to continue to look to literature for a sense of identity, personal or national; there may be no way to overcome this desire to be identical with some abstract entity, some state (State). But, among other things, writing will sow division and difference, and in living with that we are making the only responsible effort we can hope to make to live intentionally, and well, in the world that makes itself our medium by resisting to the end.