What would it mean to offer commentary on Derrida? Wouldn’t this in fact be to rejoin the game, or war, to be more clever than the cleverest Derrida, to be more ‘meta,’ to construct and execute an irony of ironies on the ‘ironist’ himself? And for what? To ‘best’ him, to outflank his maneuvers? Another domination, another deflection of his deflations, to ‘deconstruct’ the deconstructor? What hasn’t been written before about the most writerly of philosophers? And finally, is Derrida not the most ‘archival’ of all philosophers? Indeed, he is the librarian par excellence. Instead of approaching the text Archive Fever in some critical-transcendental mode that we don’t in fact possess or inhabit, rather, it would be more demonstrative
to animate a gloss with and through Derrida, to simply speak of him, of the Archive, fixate, separate, enhance and engage—but what will be done with the material surveyed at the end?

In *Archive Fever*, Derrida writes,

*Even in their guardianship or their hermeneutic tradition, the archives could neither do without substrate nor without residence*. . . . To conceal itself in a vault or domicile, this function is archontic and toponomological . . . . Consignation aims to coordinate a single corpus, in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration. In an archive, there should not be any absolute dissociation, any heterogeneity or secret which could separate [secernere], or partition, in an absolute manner. The archontic principle of the archive is also a principle of consignation, that is, of gathering together.

The archive can never dispose of its idealist element of being a mass or unity of collected (consigned) elements. That substrate—pulling together units in a univocal direction—simply posits an extensive set of all sets. And not only that, but that set with a transparent extension which always gives up its content and its syntax (either combination and permutation both belonging to the Archive’s glories), this probability, this timeline revealing enough use, reuse, marginal use, and a consultation into its ‘depths,’ its probity exceeding its magnitude, or what’s a heaven for? Humanity
has conquered its clutter, its historicity, tamed it and mapped it for exploration and yet more inquiry . . . this syntax betrays the Non-Archive’s positive attributes, not in absolute, but in a ‘radical’ manner it is divorced from gathering—a heterogeneity of dissociation preceding the Archive’s elements. The Archive demands a chronological predicate, an ‘event’ or atomistic incident, instant, or mark; then, its ‘museum’ hand may arrive invisibly, and so order in a manner of functions a design, a way through the Labyrinth that is already chosen, a foregone conclusion.

Of course, one need not make the Archive a labyrinth at all. What is the Archive if it attends to nuances or fractals of nuances? One would make the argument that the Archive was a totalitarian logic, again setting up an exterior agon against the insistence of Totality as Absolute, but the Archive doesn’t even do this. It is more a governance that does not govern, so to speak, a Sovereign without Sovereignty, something that isn’t really History but always says it is, and thus, that insurrection, rebellion, etc.

*This institution of limits from this archive concerns the passage from secret to non-secret, from private to public, what is accessible, rights of publication, rights of reproduction . . . .

There is something we forgot to mention: the communion of the Secret! Here, with Derrida, it is clear he’s on to something. That Library as limit, that very much exhausted storehouse of video, that
Platonic lighthouse filled to the brim with books, that revelation waiting to be revealed . . . this supposes that the confessional—the expository position of regurgitating biographical or prosopographical material as aggregates of individual persons—is not wielding in artifice or invention or creation, but is material to be mined. This atomism splits itself against itself, merely repeating the same thing, then afterwards finding the equivalence of the Library as individuations as part of the whole. Perhaps it really is so much metaphysics, but to our mind, the secret offers real communion more than any telling or Good News ever might. Those individuations at parabolic (non)distance against circumscribed ‘knowledge’ or record-keeping—the limit demarcates that ‘right’ or essence into a relationship not merely proprietary, but ontologically devastating retroactively what was, what was in truth and now is something else entirely. The whole celebrates itself and its dominion: always a frieze of slavery, mediocrity, pomposity and contempt.

*May the word be so stabilized so as to afford us a monument of its grace? The archive takes place at the breakdown of memory.*

When memory breaks down, what occurs? More memory. This cyclical vamping treats silence as though it is pregnant, and not pregnant in the sense of fertile, but of waiting for another lifeless archaeological impulse to bleat itself into and out of existence.
The death drive is not a principle. It even threatens every principality, every archontic primacy, every archival desire. It is what we will call, later on, le mal d’archive, archive fever.

By putting forward the novelty of his discovery, the very one which provokes so much resistance, and first of all in himself, and precisely because its silent vocation is to burn the archive and to incite amnesia, the thing refuting the economic principle of the archive, aiming to ruin the archive as accumulation and capitalization of memory on some substrate and in an exterior place.

. . . the Jew can play the analogous role of relief or economic exoneration (die selbe ökonomisch entlastende Rolle) assigned to him by the world of the Aryan ideal. In other words, the radical destruction can again be reinvested in another logic, in the inexhaustible economistic resource of an archive which capitalizes everything, even that which ruins it or radically contests its power: radical evil can be of service, infinite destruction can be reinvested in a theodicy, the devil can also serve to justify—thus is the destination of the Jew in the Aryan ideal.

There would indeed be no archive desire without the radical finitude, without the possibility of a forgetfulness which does not limit itself to repression. Above all, and this is the most serious, beyond or within this simple limit called finiteness or finitude, there is no archive fever without the threat
of this death drive, this aggression and destruction drive. This threat is in-finite, it sweeps away the logic of finitude and the simple factual limits, the transcendental aesthetics, one might say, the spatio-temporal conditions of conservation. Let us rather say that it abuses them. Such an abuse opens the ethico-political dimension of the problem. There is not one mal d'archive, one limit or one suffering of memory among others: enlisting the in-finite, archive fever verges on radical evil.

Does it bring up an idea of temporality to insist on radical finitude? Not just temporality as a measure or demarcation within a chronology—a duration, even—but that idea of this as being ephemeral. Where then does forgetfulness stem from? If it is forgetfulness rising above mere repression, it sweeps away “the spatio-temporal conditions of conservation,” that house of memory in which we return to see again ‘this’ or ‘that,’ these single moments or testimonies. Derrida attests that the threat abuses the conditions: “archive fever verges on radical evil.” If the death drive presents itself against the Library as Limit—as negation of the Limit to conserve, possess, and draw upon—the death drive, mal d'archive, destroys it, explodes it back to its communion as base, and access becomes foreclosed and remote. With this negation, but not identified with it, the Non-Library is against the Limit as absolute because in it is a priori non-topologically removed from the Library and its Iconoclasm, the Twilight of the
Archive. The logic of finitude is the Non-Archive set against Derrida’s ‘Archive,’ but also his ‘evil’ anti-Archive—a countervalence, or double ephemerality: an ephemerality with itself but ephemeral with its own temporality. One could say, “well this is strictly impossible,” but what is underscored is that the Non-Library is most definitely not a hauntology. Even with what is haunted or haunting, the sense there indicates that index of reverse dissemination as an art of memory. The art of memory turns useless and decadent at this latitude.

Neither life nor spontaneous memory nor prosthetic experience of the technical substrate, the Non-Library isn’t a valorization of forgetting or remembering as such. Some might see this foray as an answer to a question that was never asked, but instead we could reformulate it as the question to an answer that never stops answering and wants everything to be an answer.

“Can one imagine an archive without foundation, without substrate, without substance, without subjectile?”

“. . . and is not the copy of an impression already a sort of archive?”

“Freud never managed to form anything that deserves to be called a concept. Neither have we, by the way.”

To avoid impression, but to also dodge or flee its mark by absence, this is the ‘New.’ The Non-Library is the New Library—the Library not just of the Future, but of an immanence unqualified or
mediated apart from itself. This is as much to say that as although the notion or concept (or even the half-formed mutant concept) of ‘the Text’ may be so much Idealist lather on top of material automations, but to think the constative over the performative may be more the crux in linguistic terms. In ‘eidos,’ or eidetically, do we care? This is ambivalence, and the metonymy of terms repeats itself again in Plato’s nether realm of aery maths. Without a concept conceding to its own self, the Non-Library cannot identify with a demarcation or limit or captured singularity. In the Library (and in other terms, the Archive) everything depends on this relation mattering.

*If repetition is thus inscribed at the heart of the future to come, one must also import there, in the same stroke, the death drive, the violence of forgetting, superrepression (suppression and repression), the anarchive, in short, the possibility of putting to death the very thing, whatever its name, which carries the law in its tradition: the archon of the archive, the table, what carries the table and who carries the table, the subjectile, the substrate, and the subject of the law.*

With ‘law’ and nomological *arkhe* arrives transgression. The black angel of Recall devouring a library of videotapes, each labeled and with its corresponding metadata; the Utterly Neutral satanic storm that would reduce ‘essence’ away, as though humanity’s essence were its memories, or that it is condemned to be witness to atrocity, again and
again, and so must strike again at atrocity, in external agon (or the pseudo-relation thereof), always committing more war to stop all war. To deny the Library its dialectical ‘No’ means strictly nothing because the Library already absorbs all this. The Library loves Iconoclasm and renewal as pillage, mutilation, and Year Zeros (or Ground Zeros). Architecture is anarchitecture. The “affirmation of idiomaticity,” a certain differing, then deferring, provokes another unity to become “ir-reducible and necessary.” The Library as totality is ‘necessary’ in order to translate its heterogeneous, ‘unique’ contents to come to the fore. This double-bind (or amphiboly, as Laruelle discusses it) works either way. The catalog is the actual contents of the library; the library is its catalog. The relation is clear. The ones who survived the burning of Alexandria were the ones who never put anything in it.

One can always dream or speculate around this secret account. Speculation begins there—and belief. But of the secret itself, by definition, there can be no archive. The secret is the very ash of the archive, the place where it no longer even makes sense to say “the very ash.” The Secret isn’t “outside” the Library, because what would be outside the Library? The Library is taking down notes on everything. It has everything pegged. It smugly smiles when a madman offers another conspiracy theory, when emotions and intellect are delivered on the same plane; the exteriority has to declare itself as Limit, pose a ‘naming’ to its mathesis of dividing subject/object again. I/Not-I generates the circle back again: the circle with a thousand meanings, etymologies. The flowers of the Good
News are as numerous as they are lovely, and bend toward noon in litanies of color and prisms of light, but for that they can never recuperate their Fortune back to a sufficiency that wouldn’t need to document everything; it is all already inert and ready for memory to ruin. The Non-Library isn’t ‘night’ as in the Sun revolving around the Earth (or vice versa). “Black air” accumulates at intervals. The disposal, the waste of ‘knowledge,’ transcendentally introduces a ‘Non-Library,’ but this waste precedes economies of subject/object, life/museum, instance/chronosophy; the surplus, the ‘gratuitous investment,’ syntactically disrupts the ‘foundation’ of the Library, because it is so radically far away from the foundation of such an institution and all its confusions of metaphor. Derrida’s ‘death drive’ of the Archive reads as a drive, thus, of loss, but the drive comes from the given-without-givenness: a (Non)Text that doesn’t need deciphering or ciphering.

Coupling this ‘death drive’ of absolute forgetting with the Archive’s will, how does one establish principles of forgetting, to register its identity against further recording and salvaging, saving? Umberto Eco is very clear about the conditions of the techniques of forgetting: they are impossible. Now, strictly speaking, there is always forgetting, as accident. But what would obscure deliberately? Dialectically, the Archive’s order always mutilates its inventory, transforming content, but is this simply another name of forgetting? Quite analytically, through an array of semiotics and presentation of Jakobsonian dyads, Eco concludes artificial aphasia—the cancellation of an icon via an icon—
is impossible. Mnemotechnics is taken as a major bulwark against the creeping nihilism of nominalism, citing ‘rigorous relation’ and ‘real connection’ from signaturae to signata, if not reflecting reality, then at least refracting it. The sign function, the logos and its logico-real limit, demarcate, summon, and propel the chain of signifiers, the associative links which decry homologous relations—an ‘interpretative hermeticism’ where everything is an icon, an infinite regress as exasperating as it is exhilarating, turning the idiosyncratic subjective relation between two objects or signs founded on historical, logical, mythological data into a grotesque irony in which an anti-nominalism becomes the worst nominalism. If the Library asserts that it is the salvation of every expression and ‘real connection’ in either dyad or triad, it offers mediation from eminence to the world below; to produce oblivion is the aporia against the Archive’s machinations as well its ‘exterior’ negation, the mal d’Archive. This aporia is precisely the beginning of the Non-Library, its introduction occurring not by inducing lacunae into the Library itself—‘gaps’ as cancellations—but by the multiplication of presences. Whereas ‘real connection’ is posited as the affront against the onslaught of coming oblivion, ‘semiotics’ within the Library itself ‘stalls natural processes of oblivion.’ Instead, what is strictly natural is the Library’s hallucinatory fixation of an ‘objective reality’ set as itself as the perfect mirror within which Historical, Mythological, Social, and Economic reality occurs. The Non-Library is rather a ‘real objectivity’ with and through the superabundance of signs travers-
ing abstraction removed from a transcendental subject, equivocating fini-tude and processes of the infinite on the same plane so as to afford the most ephemeral, or temporal, flattening (or even \([\text{non}]\)-flattening) against any and all ingredients the Library purports. In this, it may be said that the Non-Library is an ahistorical formalism of ‘Brazilian logic,’ that exploding paraconsistency which allows a ‘free for all.’ But, in fact, it is not the contradiction which entails everything. (That would be the Library and its Maw of \textit{Mater Nacht}, its gulf of surrounding, coercion, and appropriation.) Whereas ambi-valence may highlight or underscore correspondences from ‘both’ Text to real or Real to text, this is a dual maneuver always effectively resulting from radical a priori measures of waste, surplus, or excess of multiplicity’s measures and self-contained set logic that wishes to define its territories in as many plain languages as possible. Again, this mapping gesture from the Library—its cataloging department, so to speak—promotes or predicates the constative over the performative. While we might say the performative can be constituted over the constative, this in fact would be a contradiction or paradox that isn’t helpful. Whereas the constative-performative matrix presents a dialectical pliability (which offers the Library its free range to present facticity, factuality, analysis and its demonstrative ‘objective reality,’ and the tragico-comic aspects of deranged, facile transgressive insurrectionisms or revolutions to incite themselves), like so many Ming vases on flagstones, we propose ‘small arsons’ across spasms of silence and constellations of utterance
or material superabundance that tectonically shift the Library’s foundations while it believes itself to remain unmoved.