

## SAUSSURE AND ONTOCUBISM

How many ways are there to say the word *cat* ? Does anyone ever say the word *cat* in *exactly* the same way twice ? Note that an infinity of possible different-but-similar sounds are put in the same category. The same argument reveals an infinity of possible scribbles that are likewise categorized as the writing of the one word *cat*.

The sign “cat” has a quasi-sonic or a quasi-written signifier and a “meaning” that we can call the signified.

I say “quasi-sonic” and “quasi-written” because the actual sound or actual scribble has to be “recognized” or “categorized” in order to function. No *particular* sound or scribble can ever be the signifier. Not only the signified but the signifier itself is “ideal.” It is “form rather than substance.”

We might say that sound and inscription are continuous, while the categorical recognition of a sound or inscription as a particular word is discrete.

We haven’t even discussed the signified, what the sign means. Just recognizing a sign *as* a particular sign already gives us a surprising complexity.

In ontocubism, an object is an ideal manifold of its manifestations. In the same way, the signifier is an ideal manifold of its significations.

Without manifestations or appearances, the object would not exist. But it is not reducible to any finite set of such manifestations.

Without significations, spoken or written, the signifier would not exist. But it is not reducible to any finite set of such speakings or inscriptions.

How many ways are there to see the same actual cat ? Does anyone ever see the cat in *exactly* the same way twice ? Note that an infinity of possible different-but-similar seeings of the cat are put in the same category. The *cat itself* is seen, but always differently. But the cat is not reducible to any finite set of its manifestations. The cat is the “open possibility” of its being seen, heard, etc.