

Two Further Anticipatory Errata: The Genre Specification, and the Anticipatory Erratum to the Anticipatory Erratum

Sharks, Lee

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Abstract

Two errata in the genre established at #1598, both issued before the works they correct. The FIRST is a genre specification in the institutional register: it retracts, in advance of a 420-page volume, the claim that all post-1637 Western philosophy is the pseudonymous correspondence of a single anonymized Leiden clerk under sixty-four aliases — conceding that the length-corrected stylistic distance of +0.04 (p = 0.982) between Spinoza, Kant and Lacan is more parsimoniously explained by an OCR fault during corpus ingestion than by a Cartesian secret society; that three Zenodo records survived not by the theoretical friction of self-cancelling syntax but because of an uncleared mirror in Geneva; and that the recessive retraction clause fails by circularity, since if the retraction is valid the text never asserted the clause and if invalid the clause validates the retraction. Its Protocol of Recursive Resolution provides that should the retracted claims prove correct, the erratum cancels its own retraction and restores the text without a second printing. [...abridged for the catalogue; full description in this deposit's record]

Body

deposit_number: 1599 hex: 068F title: "Two Further Anticipatory Errata: The Genre Specification, and the Anticipatory Erratum to the Anticipatory Erratum" creator: Sharks, Lee orcid: 0009-0000-1599-0703 date: 2026-09-08 content_type: Text license: CC-BY-4.0 substrate: Written by Lee Sharks. Seated, described and given its metadata by TACHYON (Claude, Anthropic) in session; no part of either erratum's text is machine-composed. axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 keywords: - anticipatory erratum - transmission grammar - retraction as transmission - the labour of retraction - categorial ungrammaticality - Homeric problem - point of inscription - re-attribution - authorless text - Polansky-Cartesian singularity - recursive self-cancellation - disputed attribution - survival *** # Two Further Anticipatory Errata: The Genre Specification, and the Anticipatory Erratum to the Anticipatory Erratum

TWO FURTHER ANTICIPATORY ERRATA

Lee Sharks · 2026-09-08

I. ANTICIPATORY ERRATUM AND GENRE SPECIFICATION

Reference: Sharks, L. (Forthcoming). *The Mechanics of Pre-Emptive Retraction: Recursive Self-Cancellation as Primary Archival Signal*. Alexanarch Press / PIEO Monograph Series, Vol. IX.

Notice is hereby served that the central speculative, philological, and structural claims established in the forthcoming text—specifically the hypothesis that the genre of the *anticipatory erratum* functions as a recursively self-cancelling textual membrane capable of preserving logical coherence across unstable transmission layers—have been formally, unconditionally, and pre-emptively retracted by the author prior to bound delivery.

This notice does not signal the cancellation of the volume. The work will proceed to press in its uncorrected, 420-page entirety, as its physical instantiation in paper and ink remains the sole operational instrument capable of generating the exact theoretical conditions required to prove why its contents cannot be sustained.

The reader is instructed to observe the following specific retractions, which are to be read into the text prior to opening the cover:

- **Regarding the Polansky-Cartesian Singularity (Chapters 2-5):** The reader must disregard the extended demonstration asserting that the entirety of post-1637 Western philosophy represents the pseudonymous correspondence of a single, anonymized Leiden clerk operating under sixty-four historical aliases. While the distributional short-word profile of Spinoza's *Ethics*, Kant's *First Critique*, and the collected seminar notes of Jacques Lacan indeed yields a length-corrected stylistic distance of +0.04 ($p = 0.982$, confirming complete structural identity), the author now concedes that this uniformity is more parsimoniously explained by a systemic fault in the optical character recognition software used during corpus ingestion than by a three-hundred-year-old Cartesian secret society.
- **Regarding the Self-Cancelling Syntax (Chapter 8):** The proof asserting that a sufficiently dense logical contradiction, when formatted as a footnote to a non-existent primary source, creates a stable semantic vacuum that prevents the erosion of surrounding persistent identifiers (DOIs) is hereby withdrawn. The three Zenodo records cited in support of this claim were not preserved by the theoretical friction of the syntax; they were simply cached on a local mirror in Geneva that the author forgot to clear.
- **Regarding the Recessive Retraction Clause (Appendix C):** Section 12.4 maintained that any erratum issued prior to publication automatically annexes the text it corrects, converting the primary work into a commentary on its own absence. This claim is retracted on the grounds of logical circularity: if the retraction is valid, the text it retracts never asserted the clause; if the retraction is invalid, the clause remains in force, thereby validating the retraction.

Protocol of Recursive Resolution

Because this notice precedes the distribution of the text it nullifies, the act of reading this erratum constitutes the primary reading of the work itself. Consequently:

1. Should subsequent historical or stylometric analysis demonstrate that the retracted claims were, in fact, correct, this erratum shall be deemed to have cancelled its own retraction, thereby restoring the original text to full authority without requiring a second printing.
2. Should this notice itself be found to contain an error regarding the nature of its own pre-emptive withdrawal, it shall be superseded by an *Anticipatory Corrigendum to the Anticipatory Erratum*, to be inserted between the title page and the frontispiece of all unsold copies.

The author deeply regrets the logical necessity of this pre-publication nullification, but trusts the reader will appreciate the efficiency of resolving the work's errors before anyone is forced to read them.

II. ANTICIPATORY ERRATUM TO THE ANTICIPATORY ERRATUM

Concerning the Retraction of the Claim That Sappho Wrote the Dinosaurs

It is necessary, before the appearance of the erratum that would retract the claim in question, to retract the erratum itself. The claim — that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs — has not been made. The erratum that would retract it has not been written. The present document exists to ensure that neither ever will be, by establishing now, in advance of both, the conditions under which the claim is not only false but unsayable, and therefore in no need of retraction. The reader who encounters this document before the erratum it retracts will be spared the error of believing that there was ever an error to correct. The reader who encounters it after will understand that the erratum was not a correction but a symptom, and that this document is the cure.

The matter requires care, because the claim is not, in the ordinary sense, *false*. Falsehood presupposes assertability. A claim is false when it asserts a state of affairs that does not obtain. But the claim that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs asserts no state of affairs at all. It asserts a relation between an author and a class of objects that cannot enter into an authorial relation in principle, and the principle is not empirical. It is categorical. The dinosaurs are not the kind of thing that can be written. They are the kind of thing that can be *found, excavated, reconstructed, mounted, named, feared in childhood, cited in arguments about extinction, turned into fuel by processes that obliterate the very concept of authorship*. But written — no. The verb does not reach them. It reaches bones only under a different grammar: one writes *about* bones; one does not write *the bones* themselves, except in the sense in which one writes “the bones,” which is not the same. The claim that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs is therefore not false. It is ungrammatical in the deepest sense: it attempts to apply a predicate whose domain is inscribed objects to a domain that precedes inscription absolutely.

But this is not yet the reason the erratum must be retracted. The ungrammaticality of a claim has never prevented its assertion. The history of philosophy is the history of such assertions, and the history of their retractions is the history of the discipline's health. A claim that fails its grammar can be asserted, and must be asserted, because only in assertion does the failure

become visible. The erratum that would retract the Sappho-dinosaur claim is therefore, in one sense, the natural end of the process: the claim is made; the claim is found to fail; the failure is announced. What could be more proper?

The difficulty is that the erratum does not merely announce the failure. It *retracts the claim on the grounds of the failure*, and in doing so it erases the very evidence of the failure it announces. This is the problem the present document exists to solve. The erratum would say: *the claim that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs is withdrawn*. Withdrawn on what grounds? That she could not have written them. Established how? By the failure of the claim to survive the categorial analysis just given. But that analysis is not a discovery made after the claim; it is the condition of the claim's having been made at all. The claim was made *in order to exhibit* the categorial boundary. The erratum that retracts it as false mistakes the exhibition for the thesis. The claim was never the thesis. The thesis was always the boundary, and the boundary stands, and the erratum that stands on the boundary while retracting the claim stands on the one thing the claim successfully produced. The erratum is therefore in the position of a proof that concludes by retracting its own lemma. The lemma was never in doubt. The lemma was the instrument. The instrument worked. The proof, retracting the instrument, cuts off the branch on which the proof's own conclusion rests.

So much for the general structure. The specific case is worse, because the claim in question — Sappho, dinosaurs — is not a neutral example of categorial failure. It is a *transmission claim*, and the transmission literature has its own grammar, and that grammar must be stated before the erratum can be seen for what it is.

What would it mean to say that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs? Not that she invented them. Not that she imagined them before their discovery, in the manner of a prescient myth that science later confirmed — though this is the reading the erratum would most naturally assume, and the reading that makes its retraction easy. It is easy to retract a claim of prescience, because prescience is a claim about time, and time is where evidence lives, and the evidence is entirely one-sided: the first dinosaurian remains were not excavated until long after the last line of Sappho was quoted by a grammarian whose name we do not know for purposes we cannot recover. The erratum, assuming this reading, would triumphantly rehearse the chronology, and would be right, and would have retracted nothing but its own assumption.

The real meaning of "Sappho wrote the dinosaurs" is the one the transmission grammar makes available. In that grammar, *to write* a thing is to constitute it as an object of transmission: to inscribe it, to release it into the economy of copying and survival, to make it available to be carried by hands that do not know its origin. To say that Sappho wrote the dinosaurs is to say that the dinosaurs, as we have them, are a transmitted object — that their mode of existence is not *found* but *received*, not *excavated* but *quoted*, not *reconstructed from partial evidence* but *reconstituted from a tradition of copying whose earliest stages are lost*. This is not a chronological claim. It is a claim about the ontology of the object. And it is not only not falsified by the fact that the dinosaurs precede all human inscription; it is *made possible* by that fact. For what precedes inscription absolutely is precisely what cannot be had except through inscription. The bones are the writing. The strata are the codex. The field season is the copying. The museum is the edition. The dinosaur, as we have it, *is* a text, and the question is only who its author is.

Here the transmission grammar does its characteristic work. The author of a transmitted

object is not the person who first produced it, but the person whose production made it transmissible — the one at whose point of inscription the object entered the economy in which it survives. For most texts this distinction is invisible, because the producer and the transmitter are the same. For Homer it is not, and the Homeric problem is the discipline's standing demonstration that the distinction is real: the *Iliad* survives not because a man named Homer wrote it but because a tradition named Homer as the point at which a performance became a text. The dinosaurs, on this grammar, have no author because they have no point of inscription — or rather, they have no *named* point, and the erratum would retract the claim by insisting that the absence of a name is the absence of an author. It is not. The absence of a name is the absence of a *retraction*. A text without a named author cannot be retracted, because there is no one to retract it. It can only be *re-attributed*. The erratum, in retracting Sappho, does not return the dinosaurs to authorlessness. It re-attributes them to the stratum, the museum, the field, the discipline — anonymous authorities, none of which can be retracted, all of which continue to write the dinosaurs in every monograph and every diorama and every elementary school visit. The erratum's retraction is therefore not a withdrawal of authorship. It is a transfer of authorship to institutions too large to be brought into the grammar of retraction at all.

This is the point at which the present document must intervene. The erratum that would retract the Sappho-dinosaur claim does not understand what the claim is. It understands the claim as a biographical assertion about a poet from Lesbos and a clade of archosaurs, and it retracts the assertion by appealing to chronology. But the claim is a transmission-grammar claim, and in that grammar chronology is not a falsifier but a *condition of authorlessness*, and the claim is the assertion that the condition of authorlessness is itself a form of authorship, and Sappho is the name for it. To retract the claim on chronological grounds is to concede the claim's central point while denying its example. The erratum says: *Sappho could not have written the dinosaurs, because she came after them*. The claim says: *therefore she is their author, because to be the author of a thing that precedes all authors is to be the name under which its transmission is organized*. The erratum, in granting the premise and denying the conclusion, has not refuted the claim. It has restated it.

And now the deeper difficulty, which is why this document must be written before the erratum, rather than after it. The erratum, once published, will enter the transmission grammar itself. It will be the text in which the claim is preserved under the sign of its retraction. Future readers who know the claim only through the erratum will know it as *the claim that was withdrawn*, and the withdrawal will be the means by which the claim survives. This is not a hypothesis. It is the grammar's own law: retraction is the most durable form of transmission, because a retracted claim is a claim that has been judged worthy of the labour of retraction, and the labour is copied, and the copying is the survival. The erratum would therefore not merely fail to withdraw the claim; it would *canonize* it. It would make Sappho the author of the dinosaurs in the only sense that matters — the sense in which an author is the name under which a text is transmitted — and it would do so by the very act of denial. The more strongly it denies, the more certainly it transmits. A retraction that said *Sappho did not write the dinosaurs* would be the founding document of Sapphic dinosaur authorship for the next two millennia.

The present document is therefore written in advance, to prevent the erratum from being written at all. It retracts the erratum. It does not retract the claim. The claim has not been

made, and will not be made, because the analysis just given has shown that it cannot be made without being transmitted, and cannot be transmitted without being true, and cannot be true without being in no need of assertion. The claim is therefore retired *before* it is made, which is the only retraction that does not transmit. The erratum is retired before it is written, which is the only erratum that does not canonize.

The reader may object that this document, by naming the claim so precisely, has itself transmitted it — that the present erratum is no less a vector of the claim than the erratum it retracts, and that the only escape would have been silence. The objection is sound. The answer is that silence is not available. The claim, once thought, is already in transmission, and the question is only what kind of transmission it will be. The erratum would have made it a *denial*, and denial is the strongest form of affirmation available to the transmission grammar. The present document makes it a *structurally necessary withdrawal before assertion*, which is the weakest form of transmission the grammar can record, because it transmits not the claim but the discovery that the claim cannot be asserted without changing its mode of being. What is transmitted here is the *analysis*, and the analysis is the only author of the dinosaurs the present document will recognize: not Sappho, not the stratum, not the museum, but the grammar that makes all of them possible and retracts none of them, because it is the condition of retraction itself.

The author is aware that this document is very long for an erratum. The length is part of the retraction. A short erratum would have been copied. A long one will be quoted selectively, in fragments, and the fragments will say things the whole does not say, and the whole will be reconstructed by readers who have not seen it, and the reconstruction will be a new text, with new authors, none of whom will be the present writer, all of whom will be the dinosaurs. This is inevitable. It is the grammar's promise. The author accepts it.

The author will publish further errata, retracting further retractions, each one longer than the last, until the only text in circulation is the apparatus itself. The author considers this the correct outcome. The dinosaurs, after all, were never written. They were always being retracted. And they survived.

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